CHARLEMAGNE ROMANCES

IN

ENGLISH LITERATURE

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Of the three Matters that go to make up the popular literature of medieval England, the Matter of France had the shortest life. Even today the average reader is familiar with the Arthurian and the Classical legends, but the stories of Charlemagne and his peers are hardly known. After an existence of over three hundred years, the stories of France gave way to the more popular legends, and, until the last century, only five of them had ever been published. Though these legends were older than their greater rival, the Arthurian Cycle, they did not reach the heighth of their popularity in England until the fourteenth century, long after their decline in their mother language. It appears that nothing was known of the vast number of medieval chansons de geste until the Benedictines of St. Maur, about the middle of the eighteenth century, assumed the task of collecting and examining all the original documents that concern the early literature of France. Until the late research

was made, it was believed that French literature began with the *Roman de la Rose*. In order to make a study of the English romances, it is necessary to investigate the earlier *chansons*.

Long before the Norman Conquest the French *jongleurs* wandered through the land, chanting their songs of heroes in the castles of lords or in the public places. How early the *chansons* centered around Charlemagne and his peers is not known. Since he was a friend of the *jongleurs* and was interested in preserving literary compositions, it is probable that his minstrels sang of his feats during his lifetime. Latin poems were written in his honor, but the *chansons de geste* that centered around his court had no foundation in Latin chronicles. The style of these songs was popular, dramatic, spontaneous, without work, false art, or study.[1] They were compositions relating the deeds of famous heroes to a group who already knew the stories and loved them. Often the skillful *jongleur* connected the hero of his song by lineal ties to the lord who listened to him. These songs have little foundation in history. The outlr of them, and the only one which can be said to be founded on historical fact is *La Chanson de Roland*. From the insignificant nucleus, the Battle of Roncesvalles, recorded in

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[1] Leon Gautier, *Les Epopees Francaises*, I, 180.

Eginhardt's chronicle[2] a mass of legendary material grew, and Roland, who is barely mentioned by the historian, became an immortal hero in the literature of most of the nations of Europe. The superiority of Charlemagne over former kings of France and the decadence of the Carolingians who followed him tended to make his reign more brilliant. During the ninth and tenth centuries, the monks and jongleurs, either deliberately falsifying history, or through pure ignorance, attributed to Charlemagne stories that belonged to his ancestors. Since Charlemagne was the popular hero, it is natural that, in an age of little knowledge of fact, the well known stories should be centered around him. Whatever the reason for giving him the glory for the foundation of France, he did get it. By the middle of the tenth century, the songs of the deeds of Charlemagne and his peers had grown into the chansons de geste, a term relating to this group of songs only. Throughout the tenth, eleventh, and early twelfth centuries these chansons were worked over, enlarged, and adapted to cyclic requirements. Though a great number of the chansons extend into the fourteenth century, they reached their climax and began to decline during the twelfth century. The age of the Crusades marks the period of the greatest popularity of the chansons de geste.

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[2] A. J. Grant, translator and editor, Early Lives of Charlemagne, pp. 19-20.

It was during the Crusades that Charlemagne and his peers became, in addition to the heroes of France, the heroes of Christianity. During this period, all Christendom was seeking justification for wars against the Saracens. Since Charlemagne, who was already a national hero, had made one campaign against the Saracens, the common foe of all Europe, his fictitious battles became sources of inspiration. His thirty years war against the Saxons, the real eighth-century French enemy, was obscured by the created tales of his wars against the Saracens. Only one romance remains to celebrate his Saxon wars, while of the others there are more than a hundred.[3] Their chansons falsely represent the single battle Charlemagne made against the Saracens. In 777, Ibn al Arabi, a Saracen prince, asked Charlemagne's aid against Caliph of Cordova, another Saracen. Charlemagne granted the request but failed in his real mission, although he conquered a few unimportant towns of Spain. He was aiding one Saracen against another, and it was not a religious war. It was during this campaign that he captured Pampeluna, a Christian city in the Pyrenees, and treated the Basques as enemies. In the chansons the vengeance of the Christian Basques became the treachery of the Saracens.[4] The chansons were changed

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[3] Gautier, op. cit., I, 219ff.

[4] A. B. Taylor, An Introduction to Medieval Romance, p. 17.

during the period of the Crusades until they hymned the hatred of the Saracens of the eleventh century, not that of the Saxons of the eighth. The single episode misrepresented by the monks or the *jongleurs* made Charlemagne the symbol, not of the Franks only, but of all Christendom. They even attributed to Charlemagne a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which he never made. The very religious order of knighthood that was celebrated in the *chansons* did not originate in Charlemagne's court at all; his knights had no connection with the church. It was during the eleventh century that the knight became a Christian hero and assumed solemn vows of religious duty. The inspiring forces of the *chansons* seem to have been traditions that arose from popular sentiment of the eleventh century.

Of the great mass of *chansons* that were composed, there is one that surpasses the others in the history of both French and English literature. Englishmen are proud of the fact that the ~~only~~ best extant manuscript of this oldest and greatest song, *La Chanson de Roland*, was discovered in England and is now in the Bodleian Library. This song represents the sincere religious tone and the exaltation of patriotism that prevails through all the *chansons de geste*. The love of battle, personal honors, and the glory of Charles and France are the emotions of the heroes. The last words of the dying hero at Roncesvalles reveals the supreme trend of patriotism of the French race. Roland never once thought of the disaster he had brought on the

army through his folly, nor of the treachery that had been dealt to him, nor even of his betrothed Aude, but he reviewed theglories of his past, the lands he had conquered, and his love for his king and sweet France. In this chanson the pride of nationalism is blended with the religious element of the Crusades.

If there were no Charlemagne romances written in the English language, the Chanson de Roland would be of interest to the student of English literature because there is evidence that the author had some connection with the Island. The earliest mention of a chanson on the disaster at Roncesvalles was made by William Somerset, a Monk of Malmesbury, who finished his history in 1142. He informs us that the chanson was sung by a jongleur at the Battle of Hastings, and other early historians verify his statement. It is no longer believed that the chanson sung by the jongleur was La Chanson de Roland as we have it, but the subject of his song did develop into the great epic.

The date and the author of La Chanson de Roland have been subjects of controversy since the discovery of the manuscript. Most critics are inclined to place it in the twelfth century, but Leon Gautier, who has made a very thorough study of all the chansons de geste, believes it to come before the first Crusade. He founds his opinion on the comparison of this poem to another chanson which he places about the middle of the eleventh

century.[5] In Roland's dying address to his sword, Durandal, he enumerates the lands he has conquered, and among them

> Jo l'en conquis ed Escoce ed Islande
> Ed Engletere, qued il teneit sa chambre.[6]

which definitely places the date after the Norman Conquest, since England had not been conquered before then. Gautier further notes that the poem must come before the Crusades, for the pagans of the chanson appear to be characters of a period anterior to the Holy Wars. The greater part of the pagans are those, who, in the east of Europe, were, during the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, in constant battle with the Christians. They were Tartars and Huns. In the Chanson, Jerusalem is possessed by Saracens who persecute Christians. If Roland is inspired by the Crusades, the spirit is of the Christianity of the Middle Ages, anterior to the Crusades themselves, and the desire to avenge the infidels was, during the second half of the eleventh century, the keenest and most profound sentiment of the Christian race.[7] In the war costume

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[5] Saint Alexis (Gautier, op. cit., III, 494).

[6] La Chanson de Roland, edited by T. A. Jenkins, ll. 2331-32.

[7] Gautier, op. cit., III, 495.

described in Roland, the "chausses de mailles" had not yet appeared, and the use of this costume began during the second half of the eleventh century. Some are present on the Bayeux Tapestry. The above reasons lead Gautier to conclude that the poem came during the last part of the eleventh century.[8]

In consideration of the author of the poem there is more room for argument. Gautier is sure that he was a Norman, and probably one who accompanied William the Conqueror on his conquest of England. He bases his convictions on the importance of the fête and the invocation of Saint Michel du Péril, a saint of more importance in Normandy than elsewhere. It was the Norman saint who came to comfort the hero as he was dying. The Norman who wrote this poem, continues Gautier, must have lived in England for some time. Twice he speaks of England as a conquered land, and in Roland's last speech he boasts of conquering England. The fact that the ~~only~~ best manuscript of the poem was found in England lends some room for suspicions. And, finally, Gautier points out that the word agir, adopted from the Anglo-Saxon ategar (spear) which is not found in any of the French texts except those of English origin, is present three or

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[8] Mr. Jenkins, a more recent scholar, informs us that a Spanish chronicler, the Monk of Silos, writing about 1110, protests against the idea that Charlemagne conquered Spain. The passage is vague and may not refer to the Oxford Roland. The first reliable proof of the existence of the poem is the date of its translation into German, 1131. T. A. Jenkins, La Chanson de Roland, xlv-vi.

four times in the poem.[9] Genin, basing his opinion on the last line of the poem, attributes the authorship to Turoude, a benedictine of the famous abbey of Fécamp. Turoude was a courageous man who went with William at the Battle of Hastings, and to whom William gave the abbey of Malmesbury. He found himself very unpopular with the conquered English. In 1069 he was transferred to the abbey of Peterborough and died there in 1098. Genin says that if he did not compose the poem, it was his father who did.[10] The last line of the poem, "Ci falt la geste que Turoldus declinet," causes all the confusion. The meaning of the word decliner was "to leave, to abandon, to finish a work" and by extension "to recount at length a story, a geste." Gautier says the first meaning is the best. But who was Turoldus? Was he a scribe who finished copying the poem, a jongleur who finished chanting it, or a poet who finished composing it? The word geste appears in the poem four times, always referring to a historical document.[11] The author might be referring to an unknown geste of Turoude as a source. The unity of the poem reveals that it was the work of one poet,

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[9] Gautier, op. cit., III, 497.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid. Jenkins (La Chanson de Roland, xlvi-lxv) has brought forth considerable evidence to prove that the author of the poem was Thorold of Enyermeu.

and not the compositions of several jongleurs, though the author must have had a mass of legendary material at hand.

In 1634, Kenelm Digby gave to Oxford University some manuscripts, one of which was the Chanson de Roland. It was more than two hundred years after this, before the poem received any special notice. The first account we have of this manuscript is by I. Tyrrwhitt in his edition of the Canterbury Tales in 1775. In a note to line 13,741 he says, "This Romance, which in the MS. has no title, may possibly be an older copy of one, which is frequently quoted by Du Canage [sic] under the title of Le Roman de Roncevaux."[12] The next mention of it is in 1817, by J. Conybeare, who announced his intentions of publishing a work, Illustrations of the Early History of English and French Poetry. He says of the Chanson, "Among the notices on early French poetry will be found some account of a poem on the well-known subject of the Rout of Roncesvalles, which, from various circumstances of internal evidence, I am led to regard as the earliest specimen in this line at present known to exist among the Manuscript treasures of our Libraries."[13] The poem, old as it is and important as it is, was not published

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[12] The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer, edited by Thomas Tyrwhitt, II, 483.

[13] Gentleman's Magazine, LXXXVII (August, 1817), 103.

until 1837, when the French government sent a scribe to make a copy of it from the Digby manuscript. Since then there have been several editions of the poem in all the languages in which the fame of Roland was sung eight hundred years ago. It is probable that the early fame of this poem was obscured by the appearance of the Turpin chronicle (falsely attributed to the Archbishop of Charlemagne) which was sanctioned by the pope and which disagreed in some points with the story of Roland.

Since the English romances, without exception, conform to the Turpin chronicle, a study of this work is not out of place here. This chronicle was composed in Latin during the twelfth century. Numerous manuscripts of it have been found in France, Spain, and England, many of them differing in minor points. There are eighteen manuscripts of it in the British Museum, most of them copies of different versions.[14] The oldest known manuscript is the Codex Calixenus preserved in the Cathedral of Santiago at Compostella. It is a part of a larger work, the Book of Saint James, which is divided into five parts: (1) the Sermons and Office of Saint James; (2) the Miracles of the Saint; (3) his Translation from Jerusalem to Compostella and the Invention of his Tomb after the Moorish Conquest; (4) the Pseudo-Turpin; and (5) A Guide for Pilgrims to Compostella.

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[14] H. L. D. Ward, Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum, I, 546ff.

The Pseudo-Turpin is usually followed by three ~~of~~ or four supplementary chapters. One of them, headed with the name of Pope Calixtus, former Archbishop of Vienne, gives an account of the opening of Turpin's tomb in a half-ruined church near Vienne; the body was found to be still entire, and was removed to a church within the city. Some critics, on the opinion that Calixtus wished to establish a shrine at Vienne, believe him to be the author of part of the chronicle. (It is evident by the number of handwritings in the manuscripts that more than one monk had a hand in the composition of this work.) Also, there is a letter, written by Calixtus, appended to the chronicle asserting its authenticity. It has been proved that this letter was definitely a forgery.[15] The Turpin chronicle contains some of the popular Charlemagne legends, including the disaster of Roncesvalles. In this account, however, the fate of Turpin is different from that represented in the Chanson; instead of remaining with Roland and being slain at Roncesvalles, he went with Charlemagne and the main army and returned to avenge the deaths of the peers. The chronicle has Turpin outlive Charles, though it is known that he was dead before 813, and it is believed that he died in 794.[16] The monks who composed the chronicle

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15 Reinhardt Dozy, Recherches sur l'histoire et la littérature de l'Espagne, II, 423ff.

16 H. L. D. Ward, Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum, I, 546.

must have deliberately changed the fate of Turpin from that popularized in the chansons for a definite purpose--to establish a pilgrimage to Compostella, where, the chansons tell us, Charlemagne placed the remains of Saint James.

The first historical notice of the Pseudo-Turpin was in 1165-6 when Frederic Barbarossa was trying to justify the canonization of Charlemagne. The general prologue of the work nominating Charlemagne for sainthood states that the light of Charles had been obscured for three hundred and fifty-one years; since the candidate in question died in 814, the compiler was at work in 1165.[17] The first book of Frederic's scribe deals with the career of Charlemagne as described in the early histories; the second is the fabulous story of Charlemagne's pilgrimage to Constantinople and Jerusalem; the third book is composed of legends, some of which are taken from Turpin's chronicle, a copy of which the scribe claims to have found in the monastery of St. Dennis. Frederic Barbarossa was at odds with the Roman curia. The Pseudo-Turpin, which glorified Saint James and his shrine at Compostella, was just what he needed to incite pilgrims to make a voyage of penance to Compostella instead of going to Rome. The reason for the composition of this forgery must have been strictly political, but its sanction

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[17] Ibid., 551.

by the Church declared the earlier chansons, that did not agree with it, false, thus making them unpopular.

The popularity of the songs of Charlemagne and his peers is not limited to the literature of France and England. By the twelfth century the Chanson de Roland and other legends of Charlemagne had assumed a European character, and all the modern nations laid claim to part of the glory of Roland. Germany boasted that Charlemagne was of Teutonic origin. In her literature Roland was converted into a Christian hero whose sole desire was to die a martyr; he refused to blow his horn at Roncesvalles, not because he wanted to win fame with Durandal, but because he wished to die fighting for Christianity.[18] In the Netherlands the romances were well known; about the close of the thirteenth century there was a violent reaction against them.[19] Even the far-away Scandanavian countries had their Karlomagnussaga that was written to show the grandeur of Christianity. In Spain and Italy the chansons were almost as popular as they were in France; each of these countries reflected her own sentiments in the borrowed stories. Spain claims the glory for the day at Roncesvalles. Roland, in reality, was slain by the Basques, not the Spaniards, but

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[18] Gautier, op. cit., II, 274-292.

[19] Ibid., pp. 293-301.

Spain has glorified a national hero, Bernardo del Carpio, who, in Spanish legend, defeats Roland in single combat. Italy, too, claims Roland. Boiardo and Ariosto in Orlando Innamorato and Orlando Furioso made him a fantastic chivalrous knight--a character somewhat different from that of his mother country. England has no national claim on Charlemagne and his peers, but the adaptations of the romances there prove the interest in them.

Since the chansons de geste were foreign to English literature, the stories in our language are founded on French and Latin forms. Evidently they were adopted to satisfy the demand for more accounts of heroic adventures. The English writers took the legends and retold them according to their own methods of narration, without trying to make them the legends of the Island. When the newer and more adventurous stories appeared, the manuscripts of the Charlemagne romances were laid aside, and most of them remained unread for about five centuries.

The Charlemagne stories were brought to England when William and his Norman soldiers came over in 1066. Several early historians, William of Malmesbury, Matthew Paris, Ralph Higden, and Alberic de Trois Fontains, in their accounts of the Battle of Hastings tell of the jongleur, Tallifer, a follower of the Count of Martain, who rode at the head of the army singing of Charlemagne and Roland. One of the historians,

Gaimar, informs us that the jongleur threw his lance into the air as if it were a small stick and caught it again before he cast it against the enemy. He repeated the same operation with his sword so that they who beheld him considered him a jongleur.[20] Wace, in Le Brut, gives us an account of this performance:

> Tallifer, qu'met bien chantout,
> Sor un cheval qi tost alout,
> Devant le duc alout chantant
> De Karlemaigne, & de Rollant,
> E d'Oliver, & des vassels,
> Qi morurent en Rencevals. [21]

The earliest mention of this feat is that by William of Malmesbury. The jongleur is pictured on the Bayeux tapestry. The songs introduced into England after the conquest resounded there for the next four hundred years, enriching the language with new words and new literary materials.

After the victory of William at Hastings, the French lords who had won the battle had to be rewarded. William gave to them the land they had conquered. These Norman dukes in England were more wealthy than the contemporary kings of France[22] and

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[20] George Ellis, Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances, I, 15.

[21] Joseph Ritson, Ancient English Metrical Romances, I,xxxvi.

[22] Ellis, op. cit., I, 37.

since the professional poets and *jongleurs* were interested chiefly in the rewards for their efforts, it is likely that the best ones came to the courts of England. These French *jongleurs* were entertaining French lords, and the literature composed by them was written in their language. We have accounts of the writings of some of the Anglo-Norman poets, but, unfortunately, the names and works of most of them have been lost.

It has already been pointed out that the author of *La Chanson de Roland*, in all probability, lived in England for some time. Marie of France, one hundred years after the Battle of Hastings, lived in England and amused her friends with her French *Lais*. Benoit, who prided himself on being a Frenchman, lived in England and wrote there (in French) during the twelfth century.[23] Hue de Rotelande, in his *Ipomedon*, informs us that he lived at Credenhill, near Hereford, and that he wrote under the patronage of Gilbert Fitz-Baderon of Monmouth. His extant works are composed of incidents borrowed from or suggested by his contemporary romance, and are full of reminiscences of the Troy Tale, the Story of Thebes, the Arthurian romance, and the *Lais* of Marie of Rrance.[24] His

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[23] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[24] R. M. Wilson, *Early Middle English Literature*, p. 78.

Ipomedon must have been popular. The three extant texts of this poem show that the author was a graceful writer, knew the taste of a chivalric audience, and was skillful in adapting popular material.[25] Amadis and Ydoine is another French Romance written in England. There is no English version of this romance extant, but it was liked by many people whose proper language was English, and it was well known outside the limited group for which it was composed.[26] The only example of a chanson de geste written in Anglo-French is the Amis et Amiloun, a romance of friendship of the David -Jonathan type. Though this romance has nothing to do with the Charlemagne stories, some versions of it are attached to the cycle by the author. Three copies of this romance are in the British Museum--a fourteenth-century French version, a fifteenth century Latin version, and a sixteenth-century English version. The Latin legend, only, is attached to the Charlemagne Cycle.[27] Versions of the Chanson de Guillaume, the Pelerinage de Charlemagne,

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[25] Laura Hibbard, Mediaeval Romance in England, p. 224.

[26] W. P. Ker, Epic and Romance.

[27] H. L. D. Ward, op. cit., I, 679.

and others were copied in England.[28] Early manuscripts of Philomena, Aspermont, Ogier Le Danois, Fierabras, Quatre Fils Aimon, Voyage of Charlemagne to Jerusalem and Constantinople, Simon de Pouille, Gui de Bourgogne, Battle of Roncevaux, Chanson de Roland, Guillaume d'Orange, Girard de Roussillon, Doone de la Roche, Reali di Francia, A Romance of the Peers of France, and Magnus Saga Jarls in the British Museum assert the popularity of the Matter of France in England.[29] It has been suggested, and not without reason, that the romance literature originated in the courts of the Norman sovereigns instead of in the courts of the kings of France.[30]

Ellis summarizes the opinions of M. de la Rovaillere, M. le Comte de Tressan, and Abbé de la Rue, three French critics who have formed their opinions from separate and independent sources.[31] Ravaillere states that the pretended patronage of French princes before Phillip Auguste had no visible effect on their domestic literature; many poets were entertained at the courts of the Anglo-Norman princes, but not one can be traced

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[28] Wilson, op. cit., p. 73.

[29] H. L. D. Ward, op. cit., I, 595-707.

[30] Ellis, op. cit., I, 38.

[31] Ibid., pp. 38-39.

to the court of Phillip le Jeune; and the chronicles of Britain and Normandy were not likely to interest the French. Le Comte de Tressan says the style and character of these romances lead us to think they were composed at the courts of the English kings descended from William the Conqueror. He notes that there is a marked affection of dwelling on everything which can contribute to the glory of the court of England. The romances play up the peers and knights instead of Charlemagne. The emperor is degraded; instead of the absolute ruler, the glorious hero of history, he is portrayed as an old man, insulted by his inferiors. We have accounts of a great number of wars with his vassals. Charles has no mind of his own, is lost without the aid of his peers, and easily succombs to the advice of the treacherous Ganelon. When there is a dispute between the king and one of his peers, the popular sentiment of his court is for the peer instead of the king. Le Comte de Tressan attributes this degrading of Charlemagne to the facts that William's successors were interested in casting a shade over the splendor of the French court and monarchy, and that when the romances were reduced to prose they were accommodated to the opinions of the time of their re-making. The Abbé de la Rue pointed out characters in English history to whom the original poems were addressed. Since there remains in French no version of the romances prior to the Chanson de Roland, we cannot see the development of the romance there, but the great mass of

romances during the crusades might well have had their beginning in England.

The late appearance of the romances in the English language is accounted for by the fact that the persons for whom they were written, the lords and ladies of the court, understood and spoke French. The first of the extant English group, the Otuel Cycle, cannot be placed before the early part of the fourteenth century. We do, however, have an account of an English romance that existed during the thirteenth century. In 1286, Baron Bjarni Erlingsson of Bjarkey, one of the Norwegian magnates, was in Scotland looking after the interests of the Maid of Norway. On his return to Norway the following year he took with him an English romance which he later had translated into Norse. His version is still preserved in the Karlamagnussaga, with the title Af Fru olif ok Landres Syni Hennar.[32] This is one of the romances on the folk-lore theme of the cruel mother-in-law, and is attached to the Charlemagne cycle for no reason.

The romances that were converted into English were not the best of the group. When the need came for composing this material in English, the best chansons had long since reached their climax and were on the decline. The English translations and adaptations we have are from the French poems that belong

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[32] Janet Smith, The French Background of Middle Scots Literature, p. 19.

to the period of decadence.[33] The English writer translated the adventurous part of the story and skipped the part that did not interest him. Usually he adopted the episodes of the French version and made the poem his own. The English versions are shorter than the French and, we must admit, inferior. By the time they were converted into English the more fashionable Arthurian Cycle had reached the height of its popularity, and the stories of the truly English characters (such as Robin Hood) came into being. The Charlemagne Romances, being unable to hold their own against the other groups of stories, were put aside and remained in manuscript form until they were rescued by the Early English Text Society in the last part of the nineteenth century.

The surviving manuscripts of the romances are few, but if we did not have one, the references to them in Middle English literature would give sufficient proof of their popularity. The extant romances have been classified into three groups:

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[33] Gautier, op. cit., II, 305.

Name	Form	Oldest Known Copy	Probable Date
I. Fierabras			
1. Sir Ferumbras	metrical	Ashmole MS. 33	1380
2. Firumbras	metrical	Fillingham MS. (Additional 37492)	xvth century (second half)
3. Sowdone of Babylone	metrical	MS. of late Sir Thomas Phillips	1400
4. Charles the Grete	prose	first edition copy in British Museum	1485
II. Otuel			
1. Roland and Vernagu	metrical	Auchinleck MS.	1330
2. Otuel	metrical	Auchinleck MS.	1330
3. Duke Rowlande and Sir Otuel of Spain	metrical	Additional 31,042	1330-40
4. Sege of Melayne	metrical	Additional 31,042	1330-40
5. Otuel	metrical	Fillingham (Additional 37,492)	xvth century (second half)
III. Detached Romances			
1. Song of Roland	metrical	Lansdowne 388	1400
2. Rauf Coilzear	metrical	Lekpreuik's edition of 1572	1475
3. Four Sons of Aymon	prose	Caxton's edition in possession of Earl of Spencer	1489
4. Huon of Bordeaux	prose	Berner's edition in possession of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres	1534

The Fierabras group of romances belongs to one of the Charlemagne Cycles designated by Gaston Paris as Balan.[34] There is no foundation in history for these stories, but the author of Sir Ferumbras informs us that the incident of the story came three years before the treachery of Ganelon, thus placing the historical date at about 775.[35] This story has the reputation of being the most popular of the Charlemagne romances.[36] All the English romances appear to be translations or adaptations of different French originals. The earliest known mention of any romance on the Fierabras subject is in a deed of the fourteenth century, by which the Earl of Warwick bequeathed his library to the abbey of Bordesley. In the catalogue we find a Volum del romance des Mareschous et de Fierabras de Alisaundre.[37]

The Ashmole Manuscript of Sir Ferumbras has several lines missing at the beginning and the end, which Herrtage supplied from

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[34] John Edwin Wells, A Manuel of the Writings in Middle English, 1050-1400, p. 86.

[35] Sir Ferumbras, edited by Sidney J. Herrtage, l. 6094ff.

[36] The Romance of the Gowdane of Babylone and of Ferumbras His Son Who Conquered Rome, edited by Emil Housknecht, p. vi.

[37] Sir Ferumbras, p. xi.

the French Fierabras, (a romance closely resembling the one of which the English version is a translation) in his edition of the poem. Ferumbras is written in Southern dialect but has a large mixture of Northern forms. The romance does not appear to be a close translation of the original, but the writer composed his own poem on the episodes borrowed from the French. The long accounts of battles are written in a lively manner, and the poem is not dull reading.

Summary of Romance

While Charles was encamped near Morimond, a Saracen giant, Ferumbras, appeared to him and challenged any six of his peers to fight him. Charlemagne requested Roland to accept the challenge, but Roland, being angry because Charlemagne praised the barons above the peers, refused. Oliver, though he was seriously wounded from the last battle, volunteered to fight the giant. Ferumbras, not knowing Oliver, laughed at his slight appearance. After a furious combat, Oliver was champion. He converted the giant to Christianity. The Saracens captured Oliver and carried him to Balan, Ferumbras' father. Charles and his army pursued the Saracens but were not able to rescue Oliver. They found Ferumbras who agreed to fight for them.

Balan ordered that Oliver and the other French prisoners be put to death. They were befriended by Floripas, the daughter

of Balan, who knocked out the jailor's brain, threw her governess out the window, and carried the captives to her apartments. She revealed to them that she had long loved Guy of Burgundy, whom she had seen at the taking of Rome.

Charlemagne sent Roland with a group of knights to demand the release of Oliver. On their way to Balan's castle, they met some Saracen kings and cut off their heads to present to Balan. By deceiving the giant at the Bridge of Montrible, they attained their destination. They delivered Charlemagne's message with threats. Balan ordered that they be killed with the other prisoners. Floripas helped the French knights by persuading her father to postpone their murder until after dinner. During this time she presented the peers with the holy relics, and became betrothed to Guy. Her intended husband, Lucifer, entered and insulted Naymes by burning his beard. Naymes killed him with one blow. The French knights, on the advice of Floripas, burst into the dinner hall and killed many of the knights of Balan, though Balan himself escaped through the window. Maubyn, though killed in doing so, stole from Floripas and the knights a magic girdle, their talisman against hunger. Balan attacked the castle but the French defended themselves. They destroyed the Saracen idols. Being out of food, they were forced to leave the castle and fight. After capturing a convoy of provisions, they returned to the castle. When Floripas gave the French her father's gold to use as weapons, the battle slackened. Richard went to get aid from

Charlemagne. A hart conducted him across the river, and saved him from the enemy.

Charlemagne had been persuaded by Ganelon to discontinue his efforts to get aid to the peers. Richard reached them and informed them of the state of affairs. They went on to rescue the peers. On their way, Charlemagne killed the giant at the Bridge of Montrible.

The French knights in the tower protected themselves by the power of the relics.

When Charlemagne's army arrived, they conquered the Saracens and captured Balan. After Balan refused to be converted to Christianity, they put him to death. Floripas gave the holy relics to Charlemagne, and Turpin tested them to see if they were the true ones. Guy and Floripas were married, and Spain was divided between them and Ferumbras. Within three years came the death of Roland and his revenge.

> Ne tarda que .iii. ans qu'Espaigne fu gastée;
> Là fu la traisons de Rollant pour parlée;
> Guenelon le vendi à la gent desfaée,
> Puis en fu à cevaus sa car detryinée.

The Fillingham manuscript contains the same incidents, but is less than one half as long as the Ashmole Manuscript, and the style of writing is inferior. The story begins with Roland's attack on the Saracens at dinner, and ends with the return of

Charlemagne to France after the victory over Balan. This manuscript has escaped particular notice. Ellis, in a letter to William Fillingham, mentinned it, but he said nothing of this romance in his account of Otuel from the same manuscript. In his letter he says, "The piece which precedes Sir Otuel, which is called at the end 'Kynge Charlys' seems to be the same with the romance in Dr. Farmer's collection called 'Syr Ferumbras' yours is, however, in a different metre, it is indeed in a metre which does not seem to have been usually employed by the Minstrels. From the general complection of this volume I should guess it to have been found in some Monastery."[38]

The Sowdone of Babylone, a romance of 3274 verses in East Midland Dialect, is a longer version of the Fierabras cycle. The first part of the romance corresponds with the French Destruction of Rome, and the last part with Fierabras. It evidently is a loose condensed paraphrase of Balan.[39] This romance appears to be a free reproduction of the French original, not a translation as Sir Ferumbras is. The redactor follows the original as far as regards the course of events, but he modelled

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[38] "Firumbras and Otuel" and "Roland," edited by Mary Isabella O'Sullivan, p. xi.

[39] Wells, op. cit., p. 34.

the matter and made it an independent work.[40] The Sowdone of Babylone gives the incidents that occur before Sir Ferumbras.

Summary

Laban, the king of Babylon was resting from the hunt when a rich ship came ashore near him. The men on the ship informed him that they had left Babylon with a cargo of riches for him but they had been robbed by the Romans. Laban called his lords and his children, Ferumbras and Floripas, and went to invade Rome. When the Saracens were about to overcome the Christians, the pope asked aid of Charlemagne. Charles appeared and chased the Saracens from the field. The following day as he was celebrating with his knights, he praised his barons for the victory they had won. (The remainder of the romance contains the same episodes as Sir Ferumbras.)

The Lyf of the Noble and Crysten Prynce, Charles the Grete was translated by William Caxton, from Speculum Historiall and an old French romance, at the suggestion of his friend, Maister Wylliam Daubeny.[41] Caxton's translation contains all the

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[40] The Romance of the Sowdone of Babylone and of Ferumbras His Son Who Conquered Rome, p. xxii.

[41] William Caxton, The Lyf of the Noble and Crysten Prince, Charles the Grete, edited by Sidney Herrtage, p. 252.

episodes of Sir Ferumbras, The Sowdone of Babylone, Roland and Vernagu, and the Song of Roland. The work is a slavish translation in which he Englished many French words instead of translating them.

Of the Otuel group there are fragments of five romances which Gaston Paris classifies as a part of a cycle that he calls "Charlemagne and Roland."[42] Of the four parts of the cycle, (1) the journey of Charlemagne to Jerusalem, (2) the beginning of the wars in Spain, (3) Otuel, and (4) the conclusion of Turpin's chronicle, we have the first two and part of the third. The journey of Charlemagne to the Holy Land and the beginning of the wars in Spain form the basis for Roland and Vernagu; The Sege of Melayne, Duke Roland and Sir Otuel, and Otuel represent the first part of Otuel, and the extension of Otuel in the Fillingham Manuscript represents the second part. The fragment of the Song of Roland corresponds to the conclusion of Turpin's chronicle. The Otuel romances, which are entirely foreign to the Charlemagne group, grew up in France about 1200, with no other reason than to satisfy the demand for more songs of the celebrated heroes.

Roland and Vernagu is a paraphrase of the Turpin chronicle; in line 328 the poet refers to his source, "So seyt the latin."

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[42] Wells, op. cit., p. 87.

Wells suggests that the poem might have been drawn from a lost French version based on an eleventh-century Latin verse chronicle, Descripto Qualiter Carolus Magnus Clovum et Coronum Domini.[43] This romance was written in North Midland or East Midland dialect, evidently by a Southern scribe. The copy we have was made during the early part of the fourteenth century. This fragment, 880 three-stress verses in tail-rime, is not important for its poetical merit.

Sketch of Romance

During the reign of Charlemagne, Ebrahim, king of Spain, persecuted the Christians and drove the Patriarch of Jerusalem out of the land. The exiled Patriarch sought aid from Contantius, Emperor of Constantinople, who appealed to Charlemagne. The French emperor ordered his army to march to Constantinople to aid of the Christians. Contantius presented Charles with jewels and showed him the holy relics; in answer to Charles' prayer, a light descended from heaven to prove that the relics were true. As Charles continued his journey he heard the voice of the apostle, Saint James, who told him to go rescue his body, which was in Galicia. The emperor was also warned that he should conquer all Spain. After praying for divine aid, Charles

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[44] Ibid., p. 88.

went through Spain conquering all cities he encountered. All the idols of the Saracens were destroyed and their spoils used to build churches.

Sir Romain, a Christian knight, on his deathbed requested one of his companions to sell his horse and give the money to the church. The executer kept the money. Sir Romaine warned him in a dream that he was going to hell. While the knight was recounting the dream the devils came and carried him away.

A description is given of Charles:

> Tventi fete he was o lengthe,
> al so gret strengthe,
> of a stern sight,
> Blac of here & rede of face,
> Whare he com in ani place,
> He was a doughti knizt. 45

One day a black knight, Vernagu, came to fight with Charles. Vernagu was forty feet high, his face four feet across, and his shoulders fifteen feet. He carried away every knight Charles sent to fight him. Finally, Charles sent Roland, whom Vernagu recognized as the bravest representative of Christendom. After fighting for almost two days, Roland had still been unable to wound his opponent. When Vernagu took

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45 Rouland and Vernagu, ll. 431-436.

out time to sleep, Roland placed a stone under his head for a pillow, a deed which favorably impressed the giant. He revealed to Roland that he was vulnerable in the navel. They engaged in a long conversation in which Roland explained to the satisfaction of his enemy the mystery of the Trinity. They renewed the combat to see whose religion was the more powerful. After praying for divine aid Roland was able to deal Vernagu his death blow. The concluding lines of the romance

> To Otuel also zern,
> That was a sarrazin stern
> Ful sone this word sprong [46]

connect it with Otuel, the Sege of Melayne coming in between.

The Sege of Melayne is a romance for which no source is known. Herrtage thinks it a translation of some French poem now lost. In his edition of the poem he tells of consulting Mr. Gaston Paris hoping to find some clue as to the origin of the poem. Gaston Paris informed him that he had never seen anything resembling it in French, and suggested that it might be a kind of introduction to Otuel. This assumption is supported by the fact that the scene of both poems is laid in

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[46] Ibid., ll. 431ff.

Italy, and in each the same name, Garsie, is given to the Soudan. References to the book, and to the chronicle[47] suggest that the author did translate or adapt some work; however, he could have created this source to give his poem authority. This romance is incomplete, consisting of 1602 lines written in Northern dialect. Though it cannot be classed as one of the best romances, it is not bad. Though the entire poem is merely a narration of military feats, the interest is fairly well kept up. Herrtage says that the poem should not be considered as part of the cyclic poem Otuel, but as an afterthought of the author.[48]

Sketch of Story

Arabes the Sultan had made a raid on Rome and Milan and destroyed their churches. Alantyne, lord of Milan, fled to another city. Arabes promised to return to him his possessions if he would forsake Christianity. In a dream, an angel warned Alantyne to seek aid from Charles, and warned Charles to help him. Turpin advised help for him. Upon the advice of Ganelon, Charles sent Roland on the mission. The Saracens were too powerful for the French, and many of Charles' best knights were

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[47] The Sege of Melayne, ll. 7, 9, 502, and 522.

[48] Ibid., p. xii.

[illegible] to the book, and to the commonly accepted fact that the author did translate or adapt some work; [illegible] we could have created this process to give his poem [illegible]. This romance is incomplete, consisting of 1800 lines written in Northern dialect. Though it cannot be classed as [illegible] great romance, it is not bad. Though the author [illegible] a narration of military events, the interest is [illegible] well kept up. Morrison says that the poem should not be considered as part of the cyclic poem Ottuel, but as an [illegible] of the author.

[illegible] story

[illegible] the Gulian had made a raid on Rome and taken an [illegible] family captive. Adaltrude, lord of Milan, tried to [illegible] it. [illegible] to rescue the lady Constantia, [illegible] to be could treasure Christianity. In a dream, an angel [illegible] Gulian to seek aid from Charles, and summon Orbelian to help [illegible]. Turpin advised help for him. Upon the advice of Dunfalon, [illegible] and Solimon on the mountain. The Saracens were too [illegible] for the Franks, and many of Charles' best knights were

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[illegible]

Ibid., p. 441.

slain. They fought valiantly, but in spite of their courage they were driven back. Roland and Oliver were taken prisoners. Roland tried to convert the Sultan to Christianity but his efforts were scorned. Arabas ordered that a rood, as a symbol of the Christian god, be burned. The rood would not burn but threw out such a bright light that the Saracens were blinded and the French escaped. On their return to Paris they stopped at St. Dennis to offer thanks. Turpin met them there. When he learned of the disaster of the army he reproached the Virgin for neglecting the soldiers. Turpin urged Charles to avenge the slain knights but Ganelon advised him to submit to the Sultan. Charles' favor towards Ganelon's advice caused Turpin to become angry. Naymes settled the dispute by persuading Charles to submit to Turpin. They collected an army and marched against the Saracens. After a bitter struggle in which Charles and Turpin demonstrated great feats, the Saracens were put to flight. Turpin resolved to neither eat nor have his wounds attended to until Milan was taken. The French prepared for an assault on Milan.

Otuel is said to be the earliest Charlemagne romance in English.[49] The Auchinleck Manuscript is imperfect, having

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[49] Wells, op. cit., p. 90.

[illegible]. They fought valiantly, but in spite of their courage they were driven back. Roland and Olivier were taken prisoners. [illegible] tried to convert the Sultan to Christianity but his efforts were scorned. [illegible] claimed that a rood, as a symbol of the [illegible] [illegible] the French escaped. On their return to Paris they [illegible]. [illegible] Turpin [illegible]. [illegible] of the disaster of the army he reproached the [illegible] for neglecting the soldiers. Turpin urged Charles to avenge the slain knights but Ganelon advised him to submit to the Sultan. Charles' favor towards Ganelon's advice caused [illegible] to become angry. Naymes settled the dispute by persuading [illegible] to submit to Turpin. They collected an army and [illegible] against the [illegible]. [illegible] the Christians and Turpin demonstrated great feats, the Saracens were put to flight. Turpin resolved to neither eat [illegible] for an assault on Milan.

[illegible][1] is said to be the earliest Charlemagne romance in English. The Auchinleck Manuscript is important, having

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[1] [illegible] op. cit., p. [illegible].

lost about eight lines near the beginning, and probably a leaf at the end. It contains 1738 lines, written in couplets with much spirit. Another manuscript, the Fillingham, contains the same romance written in six-lined stanzas written in a less lively manner. The latter manuscript completes the story and furnishes a paraphrase of Turpin's chronicle. The romance is written in South Midland dialect.

Sketch of Story

In the time of Charles there was a heathen king of Lombardy named Garsie who sought to destroy Christianity. A group of kings joined with him to war against Charlemagne. As Charles and his peers were going toward Paris, they encountered Otuel, the messenger from Garsie, who ordered them to forsake Christianity. Otuel boasted and insulted Charles:

> thou art king, & old knizt,
> havest iloren al thi mizt,
> in thi zinkthe, tak god hede,
> Thou nere nevere douzti of dede. [50]

Roland challenged him to a single combat. Otuel informed Roland that he was going to avenge the death of Vernagu. The contestants fought (observing all rules of chivalry) while

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[50] Otuel, ll. 273-276.

Charles prayed for the success of Roland. Roland, finding Otuel no easy knight to overcome, tried to persuade him to become a Christian, but all in vain. Charles and his knights prayed for the conversion of Otuel. In answer to their prayers, a white dove descended from heaven and sat on Otuel's head. He then agreed to become Christian. Charles gave him his daughter, Belisent, but Otuel refused to marry her until the war with Garsie was over.

One day some of the peers were seeking adventure when they encountered Garsie's army. A battle ensued at which the French knights were victorious. One battle after another was fought, each proclaiming victory for the French. Otuel killed Clarel, a Saracen who insulted Charlemagne. Garsie was captured and presented to Charles. (Here the Auchinleck Manuscript ends.)

(The remainder of the story is the continuation of the Fillingham Manuscript.) Garsie was baptised. War was continued with the other Saracen kings. In one battle the French knights slew eight thousand. One of the kings was killed and the other forced to accept Christianity.

Once before going into battle Charlemagne prayed to know how many of his knights would be killed. A dream revealed all the knights predestined to lose their lives. The number was great, and Charles sought to save their lives, in spite of Providence, by leaving them behind. He returned from the battle

without the loss of a knight, but those he left behind were all dead.

Having been successful in Spain, Charlemagne wished to return to France. There were still two Saracen kings, Marsirius and Beligard, who had not accepted Christianity. Ganelon was selected to carry Charles' command for baptism to them. The kings succeeded in persuading him to betray his country. The result was the slaughter of the rear-guard at Roncesvalles. The romance ends with the execution of Ganelon.

Duke Rowland and Sir Otuel of Spain is a translation of some French version of Otinel similar to that of which Otuel is a translation. It is written in twelve-lined stanzas in Northern dialect.

The story of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell is about the same as that of Otuel. Otuel came boasting to Charles, threatening and scorning the douze-peers, to deliver Garsie's command that they forsake Christianity. Roland challenged him to a single combat. Unlike Otuel Charlemagne bade his daughter, Belisent, arm Otuel, and she advised him to beware Durandal. The dove appeared and Otuel was converted, after which he helped Charles in his wars against the Sultan. After a mighty slaughter the French were victorious. The romance ends with the marriage of Otuel and Belisent.

about the loss of a knight, but there he left behind were all dead.

Having been successful in Spain, Charlemagne wished to [illegible] in France. There was only one obstacle [illegible] Italus and Baligand, who had not accepted Christianity. [illegible] the ability to [illegible] against the [illegible] king. The king succeeded in persuading him to betray his [illegible]. They would [illegible] of the [illegible] conversion. The monarchs made with the conversion of [illegible].

[illegible] and the Chief of Court is a transformation of [illegible] version of Ogiani studies to book by [illegible] Ogiani is a translation. It is written in twelve-lined verses in [illegible] rhyme.

The story of [illegible] and the Chief is about the [illegible] of Chief. Chief were [illegible] to Charles, [illegible] that they [illegible]. Roland challenges him [illegible] a single combat. Italus Chief-Ogiani beats his [illegible]. Baligand [illegible] and [illegible] Charles in his [illegible] the [illegible]. After [illegible] the [illegible] of Chief and Baligand.

Though the Otuel Cycle is longer and older than the other English Charlemagne Romances, the references to it in medieval literature are much fewer than the references to the other legends.

The four romances we have that are connected neither with the Ferumbras nor the Otuel Cycles have been loosely classified as Detached Romances. These, all except the Song of Roland, retained their popularity throughout the Elizabethan period.

The fragment of the Song of Roland furnishes an interesting contrast to the French version, La Chanson de Roland. The beginning and the end of the poem is missing. It is written in West Midland dialect. The date of this fragment furnishes food for controversy; Wells believes it was composed toward the end of the fourteenth or perhaps in the fifteenth century;[51] Gaston Paris thought it was probably written in the thirteenth century; Wright assigned it to the fourteenth century; and Herrtage believes it to be about fourteen hundred.[52] The poetical merit of this romance is not

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[51] Wells, op. cit., p. 92.

[52] "The Sege of Melayne" and "The Romance of Duke Rouland and Sir Otuell of Spayne" together with a fragment of "The Song of Roland," edited by Sidney J. Herrtage, p. xxv.

great. It is not a translation of the Chanson de Roland. The account of the women who aided Ganelon in his treachery[53] is not found in any of the French versions of the tragedy at Roncesvalles, but it is related in the Pseudo-Turpin.

The fragment begins with the return of Ganelon from the Saracens with the false news that they would accept Christianity and make peace. He brought with him maidens as a gift to Charlemagne and his knights, and everyone drank and made merry. Charlemagne had a dream that foretold the treachery. When they were leaving Spain, Ganelon suggested that Roland be left to command the rear-guard. Charlemagne knew that Ganelon was seeking vengeance on his step-son, but Roland, thinking it a chance to win more fame, agreed to assume this duty. The douze-peers remained with Roland, while Charlemagne, Ganelon, and the remainder of the army returned to France.

As soon as the main army had gone the Saracens prepared for an attack. Roland recognized the Prince of Portugal with forty thousand troops coming toward them. The knights knew that Ganelon had betrayed them, but they resolved to fight valiantly.

Charles became alarmed at the delay of the rear-guard, but Ganelon convinced him that Roland was only hunting.

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[53] The Song of Roland, ll. 72-76.

The Saracens rushed upon the French. Oliver advised Roland to blow his horn and summon help; Roland refused because he wanted to win the fame for the victory himself. Many great feats were achieved by the French, but after each slaughter of the Saracens another army came to replace the ones killed. Oliver, Roland, and Turpin slew wherever they passed. A storm arose and confused the armies. Finally, Roland, seeing the field covered with his men, wounded and dying, proposed to send for help. At the beginning of Oliver's rebuke, the manuscript ends.

The only Charlemagne Romance we have that has no reason to be connected with the cycle is Rauf Coilzear. It is a Scottish poem belonging to the end of the fifteenth century, but the oldest extant copy is dated a century later. William Dunbar in a poem written in 1500, "Schir, Zit Remember as of Befoir,"[54] mentions Rauf Coilzear. Everything about the poem reflects a Scottish atmosphere; the introduction of Charlemagne and his peers is the only foreign element. The theme of this romance occurs frequently in Scottish ballads.

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[54] The Poems of William Dunbar, edited by H. Bellyse Baildon, p. 129:

> Quhen seruit is all vdir man,
> Gentill and semple of euery clan,
> Kyne of Rauf Colzard and Johnne the Reif,
> Na thing I get, nor conquest than:
> Excess of thocht dois me mischeif.

Charlemagne and his peers were out on a wild moor when they were overtaken by a fearful storm. Charlemagne, being lost from the group, met Rauf Coilzear, who invited him to spend the night at his house. The king was entertained well, but his host reproached him when he tried to express his gratitude for the welcome shown him, and when he offered to let Rauf pass through the door first. Once when the king showed some hesitation in carrying out Coilzear's request, he was knocked down. Charlemagne, though humiliated, concealed his identity. Rauf told his best tales. Charlemagne told Rauf that he was Wymond of the Wardrobe, and invited him to come to Court, promising him a sale for his charcoal. When he left the next morning, Rauf promised to visit him.

On the appointed day Rauf set out for Court with his fuel. Charlemagne sent Roland to bring him in, but Rauf defied him and challenged him to a duel. When he reached Court and discovered his mistake, he was humiliated. Charlemagne related the experience, dubbed Rauf knight, and promised him the next vacant fief. Rauf left to meet Roland in the duel; while waiting for him he fought a Saracen. Roland arrived and helped Rauf force the Saracen to accept Christianity.

One of the most popular and most widely known of the romances is The Four Sons of Aymon. There are several manuscripts of the French Quatre Fils Aymon or Renaud de Montauban, the earliest extant version of which is at the end of the

twelfth century. The conversion of the poem into prose was not accomplished before the close of the fourteenth century; there are no extant prose manuscripts earlier than the fifteenth century. The numerous editions of the romance and the allusions to it in Elizabethan literature prove that its popularity did not slacken before the end of the sixteenth century. The Four Sons of Aymon does have a foundation in history, but instead of Charlemagne, it was his grandfather, Charles Martel, who performed various exploits against the sons of Aymon in the forest of Ardenne.[55]

About 1489 William Caxton published his translation of the poem (made at the request of John Erle of Oxenforde) which he apparently made from the 1480 edition of Lyons.[56] Of Caxton's work the editor says:

> In his translation of this work, Caxton shows himself piously literal. Words and phrases, both foreign and unusual, he transferred bodily into the text; nothing ever deterred him, simply because it was French; he wandered along every winding of the sentences he was rendering, and brought them over with all their sinuosities into the English. [57]

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[55] Ellis, op. cit., II, 288.

[56] The Four Sons of Aymon, edited by Octavia Richardson, p. vii.

[57] Ibid.

Such words as vysage, trompette, perdurable, bruyt, savour, habyte, geaunt, and pussyaunce occur throughout his work.

Sketch of Story

Charlemagne held Court at Paris at which Aymon and his four sons, Reynawde, Alarde, Guycharde, and Rycharde were present. The absence of Aygremounte, brother of Aymon, angered the emperor, who sent his son, Lohier, to him demanding subjection. Lohier was killed.

Aymon took his sons to Charlemagne and had them knighted. Mawgis gave Reynawde the good horse Bayarde.

A furious battle was fought with the rebel. Aygremounte was granted peace, but when he came to Court, Charlemagne allowed him to be treacherously slain.

Aymon and his sons were again at Court complaining of the treason shown their kinsman. Reynawde played chess with Charlemagne's nephew, Berthelot. During the game he became angry with Berthelot and slew him with the chess board. Charlemagne had already dismissed Reynawde from his sight because of his anger over the treachery given to his uncle, and this deed caused him to order Reynawde to be slain. Aymon obeyed Charlemagne's command to wage war on his sons. Their mother advised them to escape to the forest of Arden.

In the forest the four sons were aided by their cousin Mawgis, who was skilled in the art of magic. Charlemagne

ordered his barons to make a raid on them. The knights were unsuccessful because the sons and Mawgis had constructed a strong castle, Mountaynforde, which could not be invaded. After a siege of fourteen months, Reynawde offered reasonable terms of peace but was refused. Being forced to leave the castle to seek food, the sons fought their way through the hosts of Charlemagne.

In the forest of Arden they almost starved. All the horses except Bayarde died. The sons decided to go to their mother for aid. Their long exposure to severe weather had so changed them that their mother had difficulty recognizing them. She gave them food; their father left while they were there so he could retain his loyalty to the king. Mawgis stole some gold from Court and divided it with the sons.

Reynawde and his brothers went to Bordeaux and offered their services to King John, who welcomed them. Reynawde married the king's sister, Clare. They built the castle of Montalban.

Charlemagne, in his travels, saw the magnificent castle and discovered the sons. He demanded that King John surrender them, but his request was refused. The barons were tired of war and would not renew the contest.

Charlemagne ordered that a horse race be held at Paris in order to select a horse for Roland. Reynawde wished to enter Bayarde. Both horse and rider were disguised by Mawgis.

Bayarde won the race. Reynawde was not content with refusing to surrender the horse, but he rode off with Charlemagne's crown.

Charlemagne renewed his war. King John was forced to betray the sons by sending them unarmed to meet Charlemagne on pretended terms of peace. They defended themselves valiantly when they discovered the treachery. Finally Reynawde and Roland decided to settle the contest in a duel. While they were fighting a cloud came over and separated them. Roland begged Reynawde to permit him to go to Montalban with him, because he had done wrong in fighting against him. Reynawde took Roland with him. Mawgis charmed the emperor to sleep and carried him to the castle, much to the humiliation of Roland and Reynawde. Mawgis then escaped to live the life of a hermit. Upon awakening, Charlemagne was furious. He demanded the capture of Mawgis. His request being refused, he resolved never to make peace with the brothers. Reynawde granted him his freedom and permitted him to ride Bayarde to Court.

Again Charlemagne renewed his war with the sons. Bayarde saved them from starving by bearing his master to get food. Mawgis came to visit them and related his plan to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Charlemagne continued his war until his peers agreed to leave him unless he made peace with Reynawde. When he saw that there was nothing else to do, he promised Reynawde peace under the condition that he surrender

Bayarde and that he make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Reynawde accepted his terms. Charlemagne ordered that Bayarde be thrown into the river with a stone around his neck. His order was carried out, but Bayarde broke the stone, swam to land, and escaped to the forest of Arden where he still may be seen.

On his pilgrimage Reynawde met Mawgis. They journeyed on to Jerusalem where they fought a battle for the Christians. When Reynawde returned home, he found that his wife had died of sorrow. Mawgis returned to his hermitage to spend the remainder of his life. Reynawde took his sons to Charlemagne's Court where they distinguished themselves by fighting to protect their father's honor.

After dividing his possessions and asking loyalty of his subjects, Reynawde left Montalban and went to Cologne where the church of St. Peter was being built. He distinguished himself by doing more work than ten men, though he would not accept money. The inferior laborers, being envious of him, slew him while he slept and cast his body into the Rhine. The fish supported his body on top of the water, miraculous lights appeared, and songs of angels could be heard. The body was taken to the church where great miracles were performed by it. The three brothers of Reynawde came to lament his cruel death. From that time, an annual feast was celebrated in honor of Reynawde.

The best of the English Charlemagne romances, Huon of Bordeaux, portrays a new romantic spirit. Its entrance among the other romances is late and it cannot be attached to any of the popular cycles. This romance was probably written in meter four times before the invention of printing.[58] The English romance as we have it was translated by Sir John Bourchier, Lord Berners, from the French prose version of 1513.[59] Berners had already won favorable repute by his translation of Froissart's Chronicles, and Huon of Bordeaux represents the work of a skilled and faithful translator who took pride in what he was doing. The popularity of this romance is asserted by the numerous references to it in sixteenth century literature. Huon of Bordeaux, by the introduction of Oberon, king of fairies, into our literature, contributed more than any other Charlemagne Romance. Huon is not the typical Charlemagne knight; he, like Ogier the Dane, has more of the spirit of the Arthurian knight. That the composer was familiar with the legends of Arthur is evident by the references to Tristram and Isoulde, and to the genealogy of Oberon. The story of Huon was probably written with no other purpose than to

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[58] Duke Huon of Burdeux, edited by S. L. Lee, p. xxv.

[59] Ibid., p. xxxix.

supply the demand for more Charlemagne stories. Seven continuations of the original romance, four of which are included in Lord Berner's translation, are extant.

Summary

Charles, now a very old king, grieved over the loss of his peers at Roncesvalles, called his lords together and thanked them for their service. Amoury, a treacherous Earl, reminded the king that Huon and Gerard of Bordeaux had done no obeisance. He suggested that their lands be given to the emperor's son, Charlot. Duke Naymes prevented Charlemagne's agreement to this before he reminded the brothers of their duty. Charles sent for Huon and his brother, and their mother planned for them to come to Court at an early date. Amaury, who was then banished, contrived with Charlot a plot whereby they might slay the princes as they journeyed to Court.

When Huon and Gerard arrived at the spot where the traitors were stationed, Charlot came out and started a quarrel with them. To save Gerard's life, Huon killed Charlot not knowing that he was the king's son. When they arrived at Court they related their experience, but Amaury came in with Charlot's dead body declaring that the innocent prince had been slain by Huon. The baron did not believe him. Amaury challenged Huon to a duel. Charlemagne vowed that if one contestant slew the other before he had time to confess the truth

[illegible] a translation, are extant.

[illegible], now a very old King, grieved over the loss of his [illegible] children, called his lords together and [illegible] their last survivor. Jonny, a three-year old; [illegible] King that such sons and heirs of Norwegian [illegible] dance. He suggested that their lands be given to the [illegible] weaned to this before he returned, the [illegible] of Sweden went for moon and his brother, and their mother [illegible] for them to come to court at an early date. Jonny, [illegible] was then banished, contrived with Gerlot a plot whereby [illegible] slay this princess as they journeyed to court.

[illegible] Gunn and Sigurd arrived at the spot where the [illegible] were stationed, Gerlot came out and stated a message [illegible] that he was the King's son. The two arrived at Gerlot's [illegible] expectation, but Jonny came in with [illegible] dry declaring that the innocent princes had been [illegible]. The Queen did not believe him. Jonny [illegible] from to a land. Shortly, word came that if our son-[illegible] father before he had time to receive the news

of his son's death, the survivor should be banished and lose all his lands. Huon slew Amaury who confessed but there was no witness to the confession. As punishment for this deed, Charles sent Huon to Babylon on the perilous mission of entering the palace of Admiral Gaudys, kissing his daughter three times, and obtaining for him a handful of the Admiral's beard and four of his teeth.

Gerard returned to take care of the possessions in Bordeaux. Soon their mother died of sorrow.

On the way to Babylon Huon encountered the king of the fairies, Oberon, who lured pilgrims to their destruction by forcing them to talk with him. Huon, though warned by Gerames (a former friend of his father whom he had taken into his group) wished to see Oberon, and insisted upon going through his kingdom. Oberon became very much attached to Huon; upon his leaving he presented him with a magic horn to blow when he was in trouble and a magic cup from which only the man who had no sin could drink. The fairy king warned his friend against blowing the horn when he was not in serious trouble. Huon could not refrain from testing the power of the horn as soon as he was away from Oberon, but he was forgiven for the offence.

Many adventures befell Huon. He encountered his uncle, who had become a Saracen and a great tyrant. Against the advice of Oberon, Huon went to the tower of Dunother and slew the giant there. He proceeded to Babylon alone. A man who had been

transformed into a beast of the sea for disobeying Oberon proved to be Huon's helper. Huon kissed Esclarmande, the Admiral's daughter, as Charlemagne had ordered him to do, but was cast into prison before he could procure the beard and the teeth of the Admiral. Esclarmande, who had fallen in love with him, saved his life. Huon's lords came to seek him. Oberon again appeared to him, helped him conquer the Admiral, obtained the teeth and hair and hid them in Germae's side. Huon was now free and ready to start back to France, but many adventures awaited him.

Huon disobeyed Oberon's command concerning Esclaramande, and as they were going toward Rome they were shipwrecked and cast upon a desert island. Esclaramande was captured by pirates and carried away. When the wrath of Oberon was abated, he sent the beast of the sea to rescue Huon. Huon resolved to do whatever he could to humiliate the fairy king. He attached himself to a minstrel and became envolved with Saracens. Finally he was rescued by some Frenchmen who took the castle in which Esclaramande was imprisoned. Huon learned from them that his brother had become a tyrant. On their way to France, he and Esclaramande were married in Rome.

When Huon and his group reached Bordeaux, Gerand and his father-in-law plotted their destruction. They stole the teeth and beard from Gerame's side and cast Huon into prison. When Charlemagne heard Gerard's false story concerning Huon, he was

more angry than ever. Oberon came in time to prove Huon's innocence and save him from being hanged.

Even after Huon's possessions were restored to him he had troubles. Duke Raoul tried to bring about his death in order to win his wife Esclaramande.

Leaving his wife and daughter, Clareete, Huon again journeyed to the East. During the voyage his ship was drawn to the Castle of Adamant where he was exposed to the mystics of fairies. He gathered some of the apples of youth. On his journey he met Judas and Cain, and heard of their punishments for their past sins. While he was away, Oberon protected his family.

Oberon had promised Huon the throne of fairyland. After he returned to France, he and his wife left their daughter in care of an abbot and went to reign over the fairies.

When Clariet was grown she was so beautiful that she had every king and duke in Europe seeking her hand. Brohart of Bordeaux betrayed her and carried her away. They were wrecked near a desert island from which she was rescued by a Saracen king. Finally she arrived at the court of the king of Arragon who did not know of her high birth. Florence, the king's son fell in love with her. The king did not approve of this match and he cast Clariet into prison. When Florence returned from war his father informed him that Clariet was dead. Because of his grief for her, Florence was put in prison. A watchman

helped both of them escape. After many adventures they arrived in fairyland, were married there, and returned to govern their lands.

One daughter, Ide, was born to Clariet and Florence. At the birth of Ide, Clariet died. When Ide was fifteen she was as beautiful as her mother had been. Because of the repulsive love her father showed for her, she was forced to run away, disguised as a man. As Ide journeyed to Rome, she offered her services to a German soldier. She proved herself valiant by slaying a group of thieves. When she reached Rome the emperor took her into his service, and his daughter, Olive, fell in love with her. The king commanded that Ide marry his daughter. After she was knighted, she was married. Olive heard her story and decided to keep her secret for her. The disguise was discovered by a servant and reported to the king who resolved to kill both Ide and Olive. Through prayer, Ide was transformed into a man, and their lives were saved.

Ide took his wife and visited Florence, his father, who had recovered from his insane love. Florence divided his kingdom with Ide. A son, Croissant, was born to Olive and Ide. When he was grown he had the same adventurous spirit that his great-grandfather, Huon, had had. He wasted his money through his folly. At last he found a magnificent treasure that Oberon had hidden for him five hundred years before. Thus ends Berner's translation of the adventures of Huon of Bordeaux.

CHAPTER II

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHARLEMAGNE ROMANCES ON MIDDLE ENGLISH LITERATURE

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the popularity of the Ferumbras and the Otuel Cycles was certainly great. As to the extensiveness of this popularity little is known, and their influence on early English literature is very slight. All of the early writers seemed to be acquainted with the major incidents of the series of Charlemagne legends, but of their knowledge of the vastness of the cycle, nothing is known. Whenever the name of Charlemagne occurs in Middle English, it does not represent the tyrannical old dotard of the romances but the champion of the Christians, the conqueror of the pagans, and the rich and powerful emperor of France and Rome. The medieval jongleur--the licensed beggar--who haunted the streets and taverns, and was in demand at Court must have carried to the illiterate laity the chansons de geste, but

neither the stories nor the heroes impressed the common people enough to be enveloped into their literature. Not one folk ballad nor one folk tale can be traced exclusively to the romances. These romances were composed for the entertainment of lords and ladies who inhabited the castles and frequented the Court. For many an hour the French jongleur must have delighted the English descendants of William the Conqueror with his songs of the feats of Charlemagne. It is quite likely that the jongleur at Court chanted his tales in French since that was the language of the Court. In one of the contemporary romances, Richard Coeur de Lion,[1] the author states that many acts of Chivalry were known, and among them the deeds of Charlemagne and Turpin, and of their knights, Ogier the Dane, Roland, and Oliver. When the minstrels sang of Ogier the Dane they must have sung in French for the romance was never put into English. Except for references in Middle English asserting the popularity of these romances, their history is obscured. The popularity of the romances in the literature of Scots and some tales derived from the Pseudo-Turpin remain to remind us of the days when this material was popular. In medieval times (and even to our own time) these legends failed to attract the genius of any great literary worker who might

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[1] Ellis, op. cit., II, 180.

have given them a place in the higher branches of our literature.

In a fourteenth century religious poem, Cursor Mundi, the author begins by saying that people desire to read old romances; among the enumerated examples,

> Hou King Charlis and rouland faght--
> Wid sarazins ne wald thai never be aght. [2]

Charlemagne's defence of Christianity seems to have been generally associated with his name in Middle English. Even the people who did not know the romances must have known Charlemagne as the protector of the Church. Caxton, in his translations from French, ushered in more praise for the French emperor. The account of Charles in the Mirrour of the World[3] conveys the general attitude toward him. According to this account Charlemagne sought out the learned clerks and brought them to his court; he endured many dangers for the Christian faith and gave great riches to the Church; he was a great astrologer, loved God above all things, and did much to bring true science and religion into France. In another poem,

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[2] Cursor Mundi, I, 9.

[3] Caxton's Mirrour of the World, edited by Oliver H. Prior, p. 31.

"The Passion of Our Lord"[4] the poet begins by saying that he is going to tell a story "Nis hit nouht of Karlemeyne ne of the Duzeper," but of Christ's passion. This reference to the Charlemagne Romances when there is no mention of the other popular groups furnishes evidence that this cycle at least ranked equally in popularity with the other cycles. Certainly these tales were well known among the people who could read.

In a study of the romances in Middle English the question arises, what did the great writers of that period, Chaucer, Gower, Hoccleve, and Lydgate know of this material. They knew the historical character of Charlemagne and his peers, their glories in war, and the treachery of Ganelon at Roncesvalles, but it was the same knowledge with which everyone else was familiar. In his prologue to Confessio Amantis[5] Gower relates that Pope Adrian sought the aid of Charlemagne in delivering the church from ruin; he led an army into Rome, overcame the enemy, restored the Pope, and was crowned emperor. Several times in the Mirour de L'Omme he alludes to Charlemagne as a very rich and powerful emperor. His references always show a background of history.

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[4] An Old English Miscellany, edited by Richard Morris, p. 37.

[5] The Complete Works of John Gower, edited by G. C. Macaulay, II, 25.

Lydgate likewise voices the historical and traditional reputation of Charles the Great, famous for protecting the Church and for bringing Desiderius, the last of the Lombard kings, to submission.[6] In the Fall of Princes[7] he relates the glory of Charlemagne and the downfall of his illegitimate son, Arnold, who tried to reign without the title of emperor but spent his days in mischief and died miserably. The Assembly of Gods[8] places Charlemagne in the list of fallen heroes, and Aucylen, his poet, is present at the feast of the gods. Lydgate shows more familiarity with the popular tales (those from the Pseudo-Turpin and similar chronicles) than his earlier contemporaries, Gower and Chaucer. He relates the account of St. Giles's praying for Charlemagne and obtaining remission for an unconfessed sin.[9] Lydgate knew the German legend of Charlemagne's being bewitched by a ring that his wife possessed. In his poem "Of the Sodein Fal of Princes in

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[6] Lydgate's Fall of Princes, edited by Henry Bergen, III, 945.

[7] Ibid., III, 947.

[8] John Lydgate, The Assembly of Gods, edited by Oscar Lovell Triggs, l. 394.

[9] The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, edited by Henry Noble McCracken, I, 168.

Our Dayes"[10] he alludes to the story that is later told by Skelton[11] and Burton[12] and that furnishes the plot for the Elizabethan play, The Distracted Emperor. Both Skelton and Burton acknowledge Petrarch as the source of their story, and most likely it was through Petrarch that Lydgate knew this legend. This was never a popular folk tale in England. In Lydgate's translation of the Pilgrimage of Man[13] the Sword of Righteousness is compared to the swords of Roland, Oliver, and Ogier. The passing of the douze-peers is lamented in "As a Mydsomer Rose."[14] All of these references in Lydgate represent the common knowledge of Charlemagne, and we have nothing to prove that he knew the romances.

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[10] Ibid., II, 660.

Lo Charles, of noble Fraunce the kyng,
Taken with seknesse and maladye,
Which lefft him never vnto his eanding,
Were it of nature, or by sorcerye,
Vnable he was for to governe or guye
His reaume, which caused suche discencyon,
That fallen it is to gret destruccion.

[11] See Chapter III, note 9.

[12] See Chapter III, note 42.

[13] The Pilgrimage of Man, I, 219.

[14] The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, II, 784.

Even though the romances flourished during Chaucer's time, his works do not represent any knowledge of them. The characters, Charlemagne, Roland, Oliver, and Ganelon are referred to, in every case illustrating the treachery of Ganelon whom he ranked with Judas Iscariot;[15] he never accredits Ganelon's treason as an act of vengeance, but it was to him a purchased deed. His references to these characters are to be expected in any of the writings of his time. In Sir Thopas, a burlesque on the romances, Chaucer expresses his dislike of the jingled rhyme, the lack of unity, and the accounts of the absurd adventures related in the romances, though it does not appear that he knew the best of them. He was poking fun at the long-winded ballads, and such romances as Sir Percevall, Sir Isumbras, Sir Eglamour, Amis and Amiloun, The Grene Knight, and The Horn Child from which he got the meter for his poem. Sir Thopas had nothing in common with the knight of Charlemagne's Court; he was gallantly arrayed, went on his mysterious journey alone, dreamed of fairies, and fought with a beast-like giant--all which are foreign to the Charlemagne Romances. Since the French Romances were put into English late, the

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[15] Chaucer, The Nun's Priest's Tale, ll. 4417-4419.
The Shipman's Tale, ll. 1383-1384.
The Book of the Duchess, ll. 1115-1123.
The Monk's Tale, ll. 3577-3580.

[illegible] through the pressures [illegible] during [illegible] time, [illegible] do not represent any knowledge of them. The [illegible], Sherlockians, Poirot, Tiger, and Gunther are [illegible] in every case illustrating the [illegible] of Sherlock [illegible] with Gideon Lacombe[illegible]: he never accredits [illegible] as an act of [illegible], but it was to win a [illegible] fund. His reference to these characters was to be [illegible] in any of the writings of his time. In [illegible], [illegible] the [illegible], [illegible] the [illegible], the lack of unity, and the accounts of the [illegible] characters related in the romances, though it does not [illegible] that he knew the best of them. He was making fun of the long-winded ballads, and such romances as [illegible], [illegible], [illegible]. Ants and balloons. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] from which he got the water for him poem. [illegible] had [illegible] in [illegible] [illegible] Gaudy Gaud: [illegible], [illegible] alone, Accused of Native, and fought with a bowie-like [illegible]-all dogs are [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the French romances were put into English late, the

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[illegible] Gaudy, [illegible] Gaudy, 11. [illegible].

earliest one being in the second quarter of the fourteenth century, it is possible that Chaucer, Lydgate, and Gower, though contemporary with them, did not know them. None of the popular romance characters of the Otuel and the Ferumbras Cycles appear to have been known to them, and when they refer to Charlemagne, it is to the character of history and tradition, not of the romances.

References to Charlemagne and his peers in the accounts of the Nine Worthies furnish evidence that the stories were known. This subject seems to have been popular among the writers of Northern England and Scotland, probably because the Scots, who heartily disliked the English, did not wish to adopt the celebrated heroes of English literature. In The Parlement of the Thre Ages, an anonymous poem apparently contemporary with Chaucer, is by far the longest account of the Nine Worthies found in Middle English literature.[16] The author is thoroughly familiar with the names and deeds of the douze-peers, and his knowledge of the romances extends beyond the ones translated into English. The story of the fight of Oliver and Ferumbras and of the Battle of Roncesvalles he recounts in some detail. A fact to be noted in this poem is that Turpin is mentioned as slain at Roncesvalles, a contradiction

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[16] Select Early English Poems, edited by I. Gollancz, II, xviff.

to the Pseudo-Turpin, to which the English Charlemagne Romances conform. In the Chanson de Roland he was slain along with Roland and the others; unfortunately, the end of the English Song of Roland is missing, and we do not know in what manner the author disposed of the Archbishop. The author of The Parlement of the Thre Ages must have frequented the haunts of the jongleurs who were steeped in the chansons de geste, and he certainly had access to a greater number of the legends than now exists in English literature.

Accounts of the Nine Worthies occur throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Barbour, in an account of them in the Buik of Alexander, presents Charles as the conqueror of Christendom. In Hawes's Pastime of Pleasure[17] Roland and Oliver serve as examples of the helpers of Charlemagne. In Morte Arthure[18] there is a prophecy concerning the Nine Worthies in which Charlemagne is named the defender of the Christians who would restore the holy relics. This reference leads us to believe the author must have been acquainted with the story of Sir Ferumbras in which is related the restoration of the relics;

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[17] Stephen Hawes, The Pastime of Pleasure, edited by William Edward Mead, p. 213.

[18] Morte Arthure, edited by Edmund Brock, p. 101.

[illegible] *Chanson de Roland*, to which the English Chronicles [illegible] *Brunne* [illegible]. In the *Chanson de Roland* he was [illegible] along with Roland and the others; unfortunately, the end of the English *Chanson de Roland* is missing, and we do not know in what [illegible] disposed of the Archbishop. The author of the *Chronicle of the Kings* must have transmuted the [illegible] of the *Jongleur* who were released in the *Chanson de Roland*, and [illegible] probably had access to a greater number of the legends and [illegible] in English literature.

[illegible] of the Nine Worthies occur throughout the [illegible] and eighteenth centuries. Barbour, in an account of [illegible] in the *Bruce*, presents Charles as the conqueror [illegible]. In Lydgate's *Pageant of Princes*[17] Roland was [illegible] by [illegible] in the *Pageant of Princes*. There is a prophecy concerning the Nine Worthies [illegible] Charlemagne is named the defender of the Christian [illegible] against the holy relics. This reference leads us to believe the author must have been acquainted with the story of [illegible] in which is related the restoration of the relics;

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[17] [illegible] Hawes, *The Pastime of Pleasure*, edited by William [illegible], p. 213.

[18] [illegible], edited by Edmund Brock, p. 120.

also, Arthur's lament over Gawain[19] is not unlike Charlemagne's lament over Roland. A fifteenth century mumming play on the Nine Worthies[20] shows that the subject was familiar to the public. In this play, Charlemagne identifies himself as having near him in his conquests Roland and Oliver. Most of the accounts of the Nine Worthies repeat what is known by tradition.

In Scottish literature a knowledge of the Charlemagne Romances occurs more frequently. The romances were most likely brought to them by jongleurs; also, the poets who studied in France and in England ushered in some of them. Since Scotland was much of the time in alliance with France against England, it is natural that her poets should take more interest in the French epic poems than England (who was almost constantly in war with France) did. Too, the Scotch, in preference to glorifying the English heroes, took an interest in the old romances even after they had grown stale in other literatures. The poets of Scotland not only read the Charlemagne Romances; one of them composed a Scottish poem, Rauf Coilzear, and fitted it into the French Cycle. The characterization of Rauf, the

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[19] Morte Arthure, edited by Edmund Brock, l. 3949 ff.

[20] Select Early English Poems, edited by I. Gollancz, II, Appendix xiii.

description of the landscape, everything about the poem except the introduction of Charlemagne and his peers (which is obviously a foreign element) represents Scotland. Laing, in his edition of this poem[21] suggests that the author was a Scotchman who having been educated in France, connected his composition of his native land to the Charlemagne Cycle without much reflection as to the setting of the poem. Rauf Coilzear must have been a popular poem, though the edition of 1572 is the only publication known. The same type character as Rauf, in a similar situation occurs quite frequently in Scottish folk-ballads. Dunbar, in one of his poems addressed to the king,[22] and Douglas, in his "Palace of Honour,"[23] mentions Rauf Coilzear along with John the Reif. The fact that the Scotch poet connected his composition, that has not the slightest suggestion of a French source, with the Charlemagne Cycle is proof that the French stories were popular there.

The story of Ferumbras, which was neglected by the contemporary English poets, seems to have been well known in

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[21] Select Remains of the Ancient Popular and Romance Poetry of Scotland, edited by David Laing I, 213.

[22] The Poems of William Dunbar, edited by H. Bellyse, p. 129.

[23] The Poetical Works of Gavin Douglas, edited by John Small, I, 65.

Scotland. The fight between Oliver and Ferumbras, and the fame of Roland and his sword Brandwell (Durandal) is alluded to by Lyndsay in his "Historie of Squyer Meldrum."[24] In Barbour's Bruce the complete story of Ferumbras is related.[25] Robert Bruce and his followers in their retreat to the Isle of Rochrin, at the close of the year 1306, had to be ferried across Loch Lomond in a boat which held but three persons at a time. For a night and a day the king comforted and cheered his men by reading the romance of Sir Ferumbras. He so inspired his soldiers by relating how Roland and Oliver with a few men held the Tower of Egrymor, that they were able to continue their journey in better spirits. The same author in the first part of his book in giving examples of treason dealt to the Nine Worthies does not mention the treason of Ganelon. Blind Harry or Henry the Minstrel, who drew largely from the Bruce in his history of Schir William Wallace, does include in his account of the Worthies the treachery of Ganelon.[26] His attribution of the treason to the women that were brought back by Ganelon

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[24] Poetical Works of David Lyndsay, edited by David Laing, I, 205.

[25] The Bruce Compiled by John Barbour, edited by Walter W. Skeat, I, 67.

[26] Schir William Wallace, edited by James Moir, p. 220.

conforms to the Pseudo-Turpin and the English Song of Roland.

All the above references to the Charlemagne Romances represent the familiarity of the learned group with them. There is no evidence that the romances were ever known to the common people. Several tales attached to the name of Charlemagne that appear to have been derived from the Pseudo-Turpin or a like chronicle were popularized. These tales, all of which convey a moral, must have been composed by Church officials for the benefit of the laity. A mention of some of them will give a general idea of what Charlemagne meant to the average Englishman.

Amicus and Amelius, a story of two young men connected with Charlemagne's Court who unselfishly sacrificed themselves for each other illustrates the virtues of friendship.[27]

The story of the false executer[28] who, for keeping the money a dying knight entrusted to him to be given to the Church, was visibly carried to hell by a group of devils seems to have been a favorite. It appears in Roland and Vernagu and in the Pseudo-Turpin.

One tale relates the appearance of Charlemagne to a sick knight in the time of King Louis: he took the knight to Paradise

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[27] An Alphabet of Tales, edited by Mrs. Mary Macleod Banks, p. 38.

[28] Ibid., p. 216.

[illegible]

[illegible] the familiarity of the learned group with them. There is no evidence that the romances were ever known to the common people. Several tales attributed to the Comte de Gramont seem to have been derived from the Facetiae-Literary and a few others were popularized. These tales, all of which convey a moral, may have been presented by Gramont differently at the latter. A version of Jean de Paul Alin's [illegible] Blue Bird [illegible] [illegible].

Petrus and Melisa, a story of two young men connected with Charlemagne's court, the Melisa based upon [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] alleviating the sorrows of [illegible].

The story of the fairy sorceress who, for helping the young a dying knight entrusted to him to be given to the [illegible], her ability [illegible] to grant one [illegible] [illegible] to have been a favorite. It appears in Roland and Vivienne and in the Fairy-Tales.

The tale relates the [illegible] of [illegible] to a sick knight in the time of King Louis; he took the knight to [illegible]

[illegible] Le Discret-Secret, edited by Ben. Jouf [illegible]

[illegible]

Ibid., p. 214.

and allowed him to stay three years which seemed to him three days.[29]

King Phillip once complained that he had no knights like Roland and Oliver; a *jongleur* reminded him that Charles, too, was lacking.[30] The same story is told of King John who called his Parliament together and complained of the calamity of his realm, lamenting that he had no Rolands nor Gawains; one of his peers replied that there would be no need of Rolands if there were Charleses.[31]

Charlemagne, by the prayers of St. Giles, once obtained remission for an unconfessed sin.[32] This story was known by Lydgate.[33]

Aigolandus refused baptism after he had seen the wretched fare of Charlemagne's almsmen.[34]

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[29] J. A. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, III, 565 and 519.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 391.

[31] Ritson, *op. cit.*, xxxvii (quoted from *Scotorum Historial*, B. 15, fo. 339).

[32] J. A. Herbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 524 and 609.

[33] See note 10, Chapter II.

[34] J. A. Herbert, *op. cit.*, p. 518.

These stories represent Charlemagne as a popular Christian hero, but no knowledge of the romances is exhibited in any of them.

One popular English ballad, "King Arthur and King Cornwall,"[35] illustrates the diffusion of the Matter of Britain and the Matter of France. The story of the ballad is the same as that in The Journey of Charlemagne to Jerusalem and Constantinople. Arthur invited his nephew, Gawain, to come and admire the finest round table he had ever seen. Guinevere immediately spoke up and said she knew where a round table was worth three of his. Arthur begged her to tell him where it was, but she told him to hunt for it. The king vowed that he would never sleep two nights in the same place until he had found this famed round table. After selecting his favorite knights he started upon the journey. They reached the castle of King Cornwall, famed as the richest monarch in Christendom. The porter ushered them into the castle where they were royally entertained. During the conversation Arthur asked Cornwall if he had ever been in Brittany. Cornwall informed him that he had been concealed there for seven years during which time Queen Guinevere had borne him a daughter (an honor of which Arthur could not boast) whom he presented to the group. Cornwall expressed his

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[35] The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, edited by Francis James Child, I, 283.

opinion of Arthur. Such boastings of his riches ensued that Arthur and his knights were made very uncomfortable. When they retired, a fiend was placed in their room to hear what they said. They made boasts asserting their superiority over their host, and they resolved to destroy his valuables. The fiend was brought to submission. By the use of the Bible Arthur and his knights were able to overcome Cornwall.

Arthur and Gawain in this ridiculous situation are definitely out of their proper environment, while Charlemagne and his peers, according to the old romances were often found in like awkward situations. Since the Journey of Charlemagne to Jerusalem and Constantinople was never translated into English, and since we have no popular tales derived from it, it is hardly plausible that the English ballad came directly from the French romance. There is another account of Arthur in this situation.[36] The story must have come into the Arthurian

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[36] Child, op. cit., III, 503. M. Gaston Paris, in his paper "Les Romans en Vers du Cycle de la Table Ronde" (Extrait du tome xxx de l'Histoire Littéraire de la France) notes that the king who thinks himself the best king in the world, etc., occurs (it is Arthur¢) also in the romance of Rigomer: the same, p. 92.

One of the first references to Charlemagne's journey to Jerusalem was made by Moses Maimoides who died in 1209. This seems a little early for the Arthurian stories. The Abbé de la Rue thought this romance was written by a Norman or Anglo-Norman poet. Charlemagne, An Anglo-Norman Poem of the Twelfth Century, edited with an introduction and glossarial index by Francisque Michel, p. xxix.

Cycle through some other source that is now unknown.

It does not seem possible that the Don Juan ballad-character called Rowlande that appears in Elizabethan ballads[37] could have been the Roland of Romance. However, the line "Child Rowland to the Dark Tower came" in King Lear[38] does seem to suggest some lost ballad of Roland, but since there is no known story of a like situation connected with Roland, this statement is purely conjectural.

There are a few popular poems (not folk ballads) which celebrate Charles as a mighty king. In a poem "The Fall of Princes" the fall of Charlemagne, Roland, and Oliver, along with other characters of history and legend is lamented.[39] "St.

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[37] The Shirburn Ballads, edited by Andrew Clark, pp. 285 and 354. "A new song intituled: To wappe with a Widdow" is a rollicking ballad representative of the coarse humours of an Elizabethan tavern. "A Proper new ballett, intituled Rowland's god-sonne" is a ballad-drama containing the story of a husband wronged, beaten, and duped by his faithless wife and manservant.

[38] King Lear, III, iv, 174.

[39] Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript, edited by John Hales and Frederick J. Furnivall, III, 169.

George for England"[40] mentions Roland, Oliver, the four sons of Aymon, and Huon of Bordeaux as characters in romance. The ballad of "Valentine and Ursine," that was long popular, was a burlesque on the jumbled artificial romances; this ballad was remotely connected with the Charlemagne stories.

Few words and phrases coming from the Charlemagne material found their way into English. The word douze-peer was anglicized, though it always refers to a knight of Charlemagne's order. For a long time the fame of the defeat of Roncesvalles survived in a common adjective epiteth, and a strong voice or a strong woman was known as a rouncival voice or a rouncival woman.[41] The proverbial phrase, "To give a Roland for an

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40 Thomas Percy, Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, edited by J. V. Prichard, II, 190.

Many [knights] have fought with proud Tamberlaine.
Cutlax the Dane, great warres he did maintaine:
Rowland of Beame, and good Sir Olivere
In the forest of Acon slew both woolfe and beare:
. . . . . .
Valentine and Orsan were of King Pepin's blood:
Alfride and Henry they were brave knightes and good:
The four sons of Aymon, that follow'd Charlemaine:
Sir Hughon of Burdeaux, and Godfrey of Bullaine:
These were all french knightes that lived in that age:
But St. George, St. George the dragon did assauge.

An earlier line "Orlando Furioso he was a worthy knighte" shows that the ballad writer did not know that Orlando was Roland.

41 Duke Huon of Bordeaux, I, xxii.

Oliver," survives as a reminiscent of the equal superiority of the comrade douze-peers.[42]

A catalogue of tales in The Complaynt of Scotland[43] represents the popular tales and romances of early English. Among about forty-seven tales such as Canterbury Tales, The Bruce, The Wallace, Bevis of Southampton, Robin Hood, Hero and Leander, and the Arthurian legends, there are four representatives of the Charlemagne group: The Four Sons of Aymon, The Bridge of Montrible (taken from Sir Ferumbras), Rauf Coilzear, and The Sege of Melayne. In this group there are five Arthurian legends. When we consider that the Charlemagne Romances were more popular in Scotland than in England, and that the Matter of Britain was not heartily received there, it appears that the Charlemagne Romances were not very widely known.

In conclusion, it seems that the romances of the Charlemagne Cycle never were extremely popular outside of the social group for whom they were written. These long romances represented passing glimpses of ancient manners and customs of a foreign nation which meant little or nothing to the Englishman

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[42] William G. Smith, The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs, p. 514.

[43] The Complaynt of Scotland, edited by James A. H. Murray, p. 63.

of the late Middle Ages. If the English writers knew these stories they were not inspired to preserve them in their literature. The interest of the Scottish poets in this material was temporary, and was probably derived from the original French instead of the English translations. We have no positive evidence that any of the Romance stories became folk-material. Too, before the Charlemagne legends were converted into English, England had glorified a hero of her own that far surpassed the half-historical, half-legendary hero of France. The Arthurian stories presented a universal appeal, whereas the Charlemagne Romances were little more than accounts of semi-barbaric battles. In the Matter of Britain there was the element of mystery and romantic love (both absent from the French legends) which has furnished material for the writers even to our own time. This more popular Cycle which had something in common with the English people, and the romantic ballads of the adventures of such daring English heroes as Robin Hood kept the Charlemagne Romances from becoming a real part of our literature.

The subject of Charlemagne and his peers was familiar in Medieval England, and until the end of the sixteenth century the characters, Charlemagne, Roland, Oliver, and Ganelon, were mentioned without any necessity of identifying them. However, the two late and much altered prose romances, The Four Sons of

Aymon and Huon of Bordeaux, were very popular throughout the Elizabethan Period. They are the only ones that appear to have been known to the general reading public.

CHAPTER III

CHARLEMAGNE STORIES IN THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

After the Middle Ages the names of Charlemagne and his peers became less familiar, though not unknown in England. Roland and Oliver as the inseparable douze-peers, Ganelon as the traitor, and Charlemagne as the Christian hero needed no explanation when the rare occasion came for mentioning them. Two of the late romances, The Four Sons of Aymon and Huon of Bordeaux, were well known and widely read throughout the sixteenth century, but the real legends of Charlemagne--those of the metrical romances--seem to have been almost entirely unknown. It was the Charlemagne of tradition, not of romance, that Spencer's Muse placed among the seven stars.[1] Likewise,

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[1] The Works of Edmund Spenser, edited by R. Moris, "The Teares of the Muses," p. 502.

it was to the heroes of tradition that Burton referred when he said that every base swain in love feels that he has the courage of Roland, Oliver, and forty dozen douze-peers;[2] in Orlando Furioso these two peers are not comrades. The subject of the Nine Worthies was mentioned frequently but seldom expounded. An early popular poem, "The Pastime of Pleasure," mentions the increasing fame of Roland and Oliver.[3] As late as 1575, John Rolland included the Nine Worthies in The Court of Venus;[4] Charlemagne received his accustomed place as conqueror

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[2] Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, edited by A. R. Shilleto, with an introduction by A. H. Bullen, III, 199.

[3] Stephen Hawes, The Pastime of Pleasure, edited by William Edward Mead, p. 213.

> And than Charles the grete kynge of fraunce
> With all his noble douse pers also
> As Roulande and Olyver of his alyaunce
> With all the resydue and many other mo
> Theyr fame encreaseth rennynge to and fro
> The hardy dedes dyde them magnyfy
> Vnto me fame theyr names to notyfy.

[4] John Rolland, Ane Treatise Callit The Court of Venus, edited by Rev. Walter Gregor, p. 56.

> The nynt Charles baith King & Empreour
> Fra the Angell of delyce tuik the flour,
> Quhilk in the Armes of France zit is worne.
> All Hispanie he wan be battel sour:
> Of Almanie he was the Conquerour,
> Fra Infidelis, and mony of thame forlorne,
> At Ronciwell guhen Rolland blew the horne:
> Quha was betraisit and gat his fatall hour,
> Be the fals Trytour Ganzelone manesworne.

of Spain, Germany, and the infidels, and the reader is again reminded of the treachery of Ganelon. Such references occur much less frequently than in the Medieval period. John Skelton, one of the earliest Renaissance writers, appears to have known something of the metrical romances, though his delving into the ancient material met the disapproval of his followers.[5] Skelton was a scholar and he liked the old matter; it is much more likely that he became acquainted with it through his readings in Italian, French, and Scottish literature than by reading the romances themselves. He placed Ferumbras on his list of tyrants[6] and alluded to him as a "freke,"[7] neither characterization being suitable for the giant. The names and deeds of the douze-peers he quoted often. The Four Sons of Aymon is included

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[5] Francis Bere's Treatise "Poetrie," A Critical Edition, by Don Cameron Allen, University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, XVI (1931-33), 72.

> As Sotades Maronites ye Iambicke Poet gaue himselfe wholy to write impure and lasciuious things: so Skelto (I know not for what great worthines, surnamed the Poet Laureat) applied his wit to scurrilities and ridiculous matters, such amõg the Greeks were called Pantomiri, with ve Buffons.

[6] The Poetical Works of John Skelton, edited by Alexander Dyce, "Ware the Hawke," I, 183.

[7] Ibid., "Poems against Garnesche," I, 116.

in his list of known tales.[8] From Petrarch Skelton learned the story of Charlemagne's being bewitched by his wife,[9] a story popular enough to be dramatized at the close of the century.[10] If Skelton's masters had "the ful intellygence" of "suche abolete seiens" they failed to popularize their learning. The songs of Otuel and Ferumbras that entertained the Medieval lords were unknown to the Elizabethan. The romances, Huon of Bordeaux and The Four Sons of Aymon, the legend preserved by Petrarch, the occasional references to Charlemagne, Roland, Oliver, and Ganelon, and the heroes metamorphized into The Seven Champions of Christendom, are all we have in Elizabethan England to commemorate the glorious age of the chansons de geste.

The Medieval romances that were known to the Elizabethans furnished an important part of their entertainment. One contemporary writer on late sixteenth century English customs informs us that on winter nights the gentleman and his family were entertained by story-tellers who were acquainted with the

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[8] Ibid., I, 71.

[9] Ibid., II, 48.

[10] The Distracted Emperor. See pp. 87ff.

old books.[11] In a letter describing the entertainment of Elizabeth at Kenilworth in 1575[12] we have an account of the celebration of elaborate characters from fiction. Captain Cox, a survival of the ancient jongleur, took a leading part in the pageants and entertained the group with his stories. Whenever the Elizabethan story-teller appeared, we can be assured that his audience learned of Huon of Bordeaux and The Four Sons of Aymon.

In Elizabethan England, whenever the subject of romances comes up for discussion, the two Charlemagne survivals come in for their just share of the praise and censure. Beginning with Caxton's translation of 1489, The Four Sons of Aymon

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11 Inedited Tracts: Illustrating the Manners, Opinions, and Occupations of Englishmen During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, "Cyuile and Uncyuile Life," pp. 56-and 57.

> ...wee want not also plasant mad headed knaves, yet bee properly learned, and will reade in diverse pleasant bookes and good Authors: As Sir Guy of Warwicke, ye foure Sonnes of Amon, the Ship of Fooles, the Budget of Demoundes, the Hundreth Merry Tales, the Booke of Ryddles, and many other excellent writers both witty and pleasaunt. These pretty and pithy matters do sometimes recreate our mindes, cheefly after long sittinge, and loss of money.

12 Robert Laneham's Letter: Describing a Part of the Entertainment unto Queen Elizabeth at the Castle of Kenilworth in 1575, edited by F. J. Furnivall, pp. 28-30.

ranked among the most popular stories until after the beginning of the seventeenth century. In 1504, Wynkyn de Worde got out another edition of the romance. William Copland published an edition the date of which is unknown; in 1554 he put out another edition which was re-issued the same year.[13] Few books belonging to this early date can claim five publications within three-quarters of a century. The popularity of this romance was not confined to the reading of the book. It was in the collections of the professional story-tellers, and furthermore it was dramatized. An account in Henslowe's Diary[14] shows that arrangements were made for the production of the play during 1603. The play was probably an old one and was taken on condition that if some company did not produce it within a year, Shaw would refund the money he had received for it.[15] No account of the production of the play in England is extant, nor was it published. We do, however, know that the play was produced by English actors. Thomas Heywood in "An Apology for Actors"[16] tells of an exciting incident that occurred while a

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[13] Short Title Catalogue, p. 23.

[14] Henslowe's Diary, edited by Walter W. Greg, I, 173.

[15] Ibid., I, 176.

[16] The Somers Collection of Tracts, Thomas Heywood, "Apology for Actors," p. 599.

troup of English comedians were presenting The Four Sons of Aymon before the theater audience of Amsterdam. The last part of the play which showed the laborers murdering the penitent Rinaldo by driving a nail through his head, brought forth a scream from a woman who was in a remote gallery. The performance was disturbed long enough for the woman to be carried out. The scene of Rinaldo's murder so confused her that some days after, she confessed that twelve years before, she had killed her husband in the same manner as the murder she had witnessed on the stage. Just punishment followed her confession. We do not know the date of the performance of this play but it was some years before 1612 when Heywood's apology was written.

Huon of Bordeaux seems to have been even more popular than The Four Sons of Aymon. This story, the most unCharlemagne of the Charlemagne Romances, was the last to be put into English. Huon has more of the characteristics of a fashionable knight of the British Romances than of the French Cycle, and his adventures made enjoyable reading matter for those who were no longer interested in the glories of the French nation. At least three editions of the romance appeared, and there were probably others that were lost. Lord Berner's translation was first published about 1534. No copy of the second edition is extant, but the colophon of the third edition (1601) states that the book was translated by Lord Berners in the year of our Lord one thousand five hundred three score and ten. This

cannot be referring to the first edition; therefore, there must have been a second edition in 1570.[17] We have no positive information of one later than the third edition of 1601, but an entrance in the Stationer's Register in 1615[18] proves that the copyright continued to be of value to the publisher, and the book may have been reprinted.

In a ballad, "The Fall of Princes,"[19] written soon after the death of Henry the Eighth, the fall of Huon is lamented along with that of Roland, Oliver, and the Worthies. Gervase Markham, a writer on practical subjects of his day, used the story of the Adamant Castle from Huon of Bordeaux to illustrate the attraction of Mammon for people of the world.[20] In an inventory of the property of Richard Brereton in 1558, Huon of Bordeaux was valued at the high sum of xviijd.[21] In 1572,

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[17] Huon of Bordeaux, LV.

[18] Stationer's Register, III, 265 b.

[19] Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript Ballads and Romances, edited by Hales and Furnivall, III, 171.

[20] Inedited Tracts, Gervase Markham, "The Servingman's Comfort," p. 149.

[21] Huon of Bordeaux, XLIX, quoted from Halliwell's Folio of Shakespeare, V, 85.

in the pamphlet, "A Brief and Necessary Instruction," the book overrates its usual reputation by being included in a list of works as being fit for gentlemen's reading.[22]

Huon of Bordeaux was also dramatized. In 1593-94 it was produced at least three times by the players of the Earl of Essex.[23] The play was never printed, nor is anything known of its stage success.

Huon of Bordeaux was appreciated by literary men as well as by the general reading public. Spenser had read the romance, though in his famous letter to Raleigh[24] he does not acknowledge his indebtedness to it as he did to the stories of Arthur and his other sources. He admits that he colored his work with a historical fiction which men must delight to read "rather for variety of matter than for profite of the ensample."[25] Jefferson B. Fletcher, in an article appearing in the Journal of

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22 Huon of Bordeaux, XLIX, quoted from Collier by Mr. Furnivall in his introduction to Cox's Ballads.

23 Henslowe's Diary, I, 16.

24 The Works of Edmund Spenser, edited by R. Morris, p. 3.

25 Ibid.

Germanic Philology[26] drew several parallels to show that Spenser borrowed from Huon of Bordeaux the general outlines and characters of his fairy world. Another article by John R. Macarthur published in the same journal a few years later[27] refuted Fletcher's argument. Macarthur, however, pointed out other similarities between the two works; the fight between the Red Cross Knight and the Dragon[28] resembles Huon's fight with the Dragon at the Castle of Adamant;[29] Huon's voyage before he reached the Castle of Adamant[30] is reminiscent of the description of the voyage around the magnetic rock;[31] and, the seat of Oberon in fairy land[32] furnishes a parallel to the

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[26] Jefferson B. Fletcher, "Huon of Bordeaux and the Fairie Queene," Journal of Germanic Philology, II (1898), 203-212.

[27] John R. Macarthur, "The Influence of Huon of Bordeaux upon the Fairie Queene," Journal of Germanic Philology, IV (1901), 215-238.

[28] Faerie Queene, Book I, Canto XI.

[29] Huon of Bordeaux, pp. 374-435.

[30] Ibid., pp. 360ff.

[31] Faerie Queene, Book II, Canto XII.

[32] Huon of Bordeaux, pp. 596ff.

description of the tower in which the faerie queene dwelt.[33] Spenser was certainly familiar with the romance, but his dependence upon it as a source of his Faerie Queene is very slight.

The chief contribution (and probably the only one) the Charlemagne romances made to English literature was the introduction of Oberon, king of the fairies. This half-human, half-fairy character was a great favorite among the Elizabethan writers of fantasy. Robert Greene, a professional writer who should have despised the romances, certainly must have known the fairy of Huon of Bordeaux when he created his Oberon in The Scottish History of James the Fourth.[34] Greene's fairy, like Huon's is small of stature, declares love for Bohan the Scot the first time he sees him, and prophecies for his son a life of wandering and distress. He is fabulously wealthy and has power fo help his less fortunate friend. Greene's Oberon could hardly have been the source of Shakespeare's character.

Though we have no evidence that Shakespeare had ever read Huon of Bordeaux, it is probable that he knew the story. In

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[33] Faerie Queene, Book I, Canto X, st. 55 and 58.

[34] The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene, edited by J. Churton Collins, II, pp. 87ff.

Much Ado about Nothing,[35] Benedict in offering to go on various embassages for Pedro, says that he will bring him the hair of Great Cham's beard, which seems to be an allusion to Huon's endeavor to obtain the beard of the Admiral of Babylon. Shakespeare's fairy king in Midsummer Night's Dream is somewhat different from Oberon in Huon of Bordeaux, though there are points of similarity. Both fairies are foreign to the western world; Huon came upon the fairy kingdom somewhere in the East when he was journeying toward Jerusalem; Shakespeare's Oberon came from India[36] and the spiced Indian air was a frequent haunt of Titania, who stole from there the boy that caused Oberon's jealousy. Both fairies inflict the most humiliating punishments on their loved ones who disobey them; likewise, both of them forgive their victims and help them. It could be that Shakespeare became acquainted with the characters through the dramatized romance. The later Oberon's of Drayton's Nymphidia, Randolph's Amyntas, and Herrick's Oberon's Feast were all associated with Robin Goodfellow and were obviously based on Shakespeare's character.

Oberon was an apt character for the dramatic creations that

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[35] Much Ado about Nothing, Act II, Scene I. 86-87.

[36] A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act II, Scene I, ll. 72-73.

were popular at Court entertainments. Jonson wrote a mask, Oberon the Faery Prince for Prince Henry. This mask was presented at Court the first of January, 1611.[37] Having been intended for the entertainment of foreign royalty, the mask was very elaborate. Prince Henry, who represented Oberon, was drawn in a chariot by two white bears and was accompanied by fairies. Jonson's adoption of the fairy king is no sign that he had read Huon of Bordeaux; it is certain that by the time he wrote the mask, Oberon had assumed an established place in English Fairy-lore.

In one Elizabethan play, The Distracted Emperor, there is a fusion of the traditional characters of the Charlemagne Romances with the characters of the imported Italian stories. This play was written sometime between 1584 and 1600. (Chambers says the style points to the latter date.)[38] In 1589 when Peele wrote his "Farewell" to Drake and Norris who were in command of the English fleet sailing for Portugal he reminded them whom they should bid adieu, including the theaters and players, and among them:

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[37] E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, III, 385.

[38] Ibid., IV, 5.

> Bid theatres and proud tragedians,
> Bid Mohamet's paw, and mighty Tamburlaine,
> King Charlemagne, Tom Stukeley, and the rest,
> Adieu. [39]

Thus, some play of Charlemagne must have been produced before that time. This date is too early for the accounts we have of the plays, Huon of Bordeaux and The Four Sons of Aymon, though there might have been an earlier production of these dramas. Greene's Orlando Furioso could not have been the play referred to, for the character Charlemagne does not appear there; besides, Greene's play was not produced before 1591. The author of the play is likewise unknown; various scholars have suggested Chapman, Tourneur, Marston, and Dekker.[40] We know nothing of the popularity of this play.

The gross facts which form the plot of this drama are found in an old German legend.[41] When Fastrada was wedded to Charlemagne, some of the Magi in the train of the ambassadors of Aarounal-Roschid prepared for her a magic ring that caused her husband to be fascinated with the person, place, or thing that was nearest it. All her life she possessed the constant love

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[39] The Works of George Peele, edited by A. H. Bullen, II, 238.

[40] E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, IV, 5.

[41] Notes and Queries, First Series, I, 140-141.

of Charlemagne. When she died, the ring was not removed from her finger, and the king was still so attracted to her that he refused to allow the body to be buried. His confessor, who had some knowledge of magic, discovered the ring and removed it from her finger. Immediately the emperor's affections were changed to the confessor who was promoted to the highest position in the empire. The Archbishop either because he could rise no higher in power, or because his conscience bothered him for having possessed a heathen charm, threw the ring into the lake. Charlemagne became attached to the lake and built a castle over it, around which the town of Ingethum grew. Here he lived until he died. His throes of death were long and violent; the Archbishop perceived the cause of his lingering. He proceeded to have the lake dragged and the ring given to the king, whereupon he was able to part with his life in peace.

Since this legend does not appear to have been popularly known in England, the author must have found in Petrarch his only source. As has been noted above, Lydgate and Skelton knew this legend. Burton, in his Anatomy of Melancholy

tells this story, acknowledging Petrarch as his source.[42] The author grafted into his drama a mass of material that was general knowledge. His conception of Ganelon and his family as being treacherous was traditional knowledge, and when a villain was needed as the instigator of the sorcery worked by the ring, since he was the known traitor of Charlemagne's Court, he was the legitimate person to take credit for the

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[42] Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, edited by A. R. Shilleto, with an introduction by A. H. Bullen, III, 150-151. But of all others, that which Petrach, epist. famil. lib. 1. ep. 5, relates of Charles the Great, is most memorable. He foolishly doted upon a woman of mean favour and condition, many years together, wholly delighting in her company, to the great grief and indignation of his friends and followers. When she was dead, he did embrace her corpse, as Apollo did the bay-tree for his Daphne, and caused her Coffin (richly embalmed and decked with Jewels) to be carried about with him, over which he still lamented. At last a venerable Bishop that followed his Court, prayed earnestly to God (commiserating his Lord and Master's case) to know the true cause of this mad passion, and whence it proceeded; it was revealed to him in fine that the cause of the Emperor's mad love lay under the dead woman's tongue. The Bishop went hastily to the carkass, and took a small ring thence; upon the removal the Emperor abhorred the corpse, and instead of it fell as furiously in love with the Bishop, he would not suffer him to be out of his presence: which when the Bishop perceived, he flung the ring into the midst of a great lake, where the King then was. From that hour the Emperor, neglecting all his other houses, dwelt at Aix, built a fair house in the midst of the Marsh, to his infinite expense, and a Temple by it, where after he was buried, and in which city all his posterity ever since use to be crowned.

foul deed. The absence of the ancient step-father-vengeance motif is obvious; the fact that it was not included here furnishes sufficient evidence that this once popular story had become unknown, at least to the author of this play and to his audience. The attribution of the sordery to Ganelon is wholly created by the author. Turpin was not named as Charlemagne's confessor in either the legend or Petrarch's epistle; his position must have been generally known since the author offered no explanation. The conclusion of the play makes us wonder whether the author knew of the fate of Ganelon; (he has Ganelon broken upon a wheel as punishment for the murders he had committed). The contemporary plays founded on history or legend tended to conform to what the audience already knew. If the audience had known the story of Ganelon's being torn apart by wild horses for betraying Roland, this change in the story would have met disapproval. We may be sure the Elizabethan did recognize Ganelon as a traitor, but it seems obvious that the average person did not know the details of his history. Apart from the characters of Ganelon and Turpin, the play is founded upon Italianized characters, usually wholly worked over by the author.

Orlando in <u>The Distracted Emperor</u> is the same type character as is represented in <u>Orlando Furioso</u>. He is a melancholy

character, a victim of Fate,[43] who has neither the vigor of Roland of the romances nor the amorous qualities of Ariosto's character. His allusion to his madness and his love for Angelica[44] shows the familiarity of the story in Orlando Furioso which was presented in Greene's drama. He has made a conquest of Spain and, at last, is given that territory. Nothing about the character of Orlando shows even a remote knowledge of the Roland of romance.

Charlemagne descends from his elevated position among the Worthies and becomes the old dotard of the romances. He is easily influenced by Ganelon, acts without reflection on his part, calls for justification of the accusation of Ganelon, banishes Ganelon to gratify Orlando, and in the end shows no mercy toward those proved guilty. He is an old man with neither dignity nor intelligence, his only superior quality being his name.

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[43] A Collection of Old Plays, edited by A. H. Bullen, III, p. 186:

> I am the very foote-ball of the starres.

[44] Ibid., p. 219:

> I am in al thynges most unfortunate.
> Witness my fyrst love to Angellica,
> . . . . . my cursse
> My manye shypwracks, my combattings,
> Charmes and inchauntments or whatever ells
> Can breake the harte of resolutyon.

Reinaldo (as the name alone shows) and Richard are pure Italian characters. Since their parentage is not dwelt upon in the Italian, they were recognized as the sons of Aymon through the knowledge of the romance. Neither of them is the powerful peer of the Four Sons of Aymon. Reinaldo plays a very insignificant part; Richard easily yields to the treachery of Ganelon.

The other characters show little of the Charlemagne tradition. Oliver appears, but nothing is said of his companionship with Orlando. Bertha, the daughter of Eudon enamored to La Busse (Ganelon's respected son), in name, recalls Charlemagne's sister, the mother of Roland. Too, the name of Theodora, sister of Ganelon and wife of Charlemagne, reminds us of Theodoric, the knight who represented the accusers of Ganelon in the combat with Pinabel. Didier is the Machiavellian villain, and La Fue a corrupted form of the Italian sorcerer.

The Distracted Emperor shows that the Elizabethan knew of the Court of Charlemagne in which there was a famous traitor, Ganelon, and the famous heroes, Oliver, Orlando, Turpin, Reinaldo, and Richard. Nothing in the play represents a knowledge of the old romances.

In 1597 appeared Richard Johnson's Seven Champions of Christendom, an assimilation of the heroic adventures of the Medieval Romances. The later editions of this book, appearing in 1608, 1612, 1623, 1626, and 1639, show that it was very

popular. It is frequently referred to in Elizabethan literature and condemned by Burton along with Huon of Bordeaux and The Four Sons of Aymon.[45] This story of chivalry probably existed long before Johnson put it into print. Though Charlemagne and his peers do not appear, their characteristics are represented by St. Dennis, the Champion for France.[46] St. George is the mighty hero, and all the other champions are subordinate to him.

This romance was dramatized by John Kirk sometime before 1638, the year of its publication. In "The Epistle Dedicatory" the author states that such works as this had been "acceptable to most men, contemn'd by few, unlesse it bee those of the more Stoicall disposition, whose rigid Fronts cry downe all

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[45] Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, II, 107.

[46] Ritson saw in the Seven Champions of Christendom the characters of the romances. He says, "about the year 1600, appear'd 'The famous history of the seven Champions of Christendom,' in which the Rowland, Oliver, Guy, Bevis, &c. the fabulous heroes of the old romances are metamorphosed into Saint George, Saint Denis, Saint James, Saint Anthony, Saint Andrew, Saint Patrick, and Saint David, the no less fabulous heroes of legend and religious imposture; most of them receive a certain degree of adoration, like the pagan deitys of old, by the dedication of churches, devotional days, and the like: which celebrated work, being a compound of superstition, and, as it were, all the lyes of Christendom in one lye, is, in many parts of the country believed, at this day, to be, 'as true as the gospel.'" Ancient English Metrical Romances, I, xxxiv.

things, but what themselves approve of."[47] He further informs us that it was received with applause and commendations.

A glimpse at the Stationer's Register reveals that the old romances furnished by far the greatest amount of material for the reading public until well into the seventeenth century. In spite of the bitter censure of those who sought to reform the literary standards, the prose romances continued to be read; nor did the school of professional writers with all their protests keep these popular tales from being reprinted. The published condemnations of Huon of Bordeaux, The Four Sons of Aymon, The Seven Champions of Christendom, and the Arthurian stories is proof of their popularity. In an age when poets were seeking recognition of individual merit it is natural that they would rebel against the conventional jingled meters of the ancient, worn-out stories. Quite often the best poets of the time would include the old matter in their works, but usually with apologies. Spenser infused the romance into his allegory to make it conform to the popular reading matter. Sidney appears to have had a certain appreciation of the old legends but he makes no attempt to justify his catholicity. It

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[47] John Kirke, The Seven Champions of Christendom, edited by Giles Edwin Dawson, p. 3.

seems that at one time he considered turning his Arcadia into a series of Arthurian legends.[48] That he did not rate this book very highly is shown by his introductory letter to his sister.[49] He counts it as an idle work of the same type as could be found in a haberdasher's shop, and he had no intention that it would ever be published. We do not know that Sidney knew the two Charlemagne romances, but he did rate Orlando Furioso and Arthur as being pleasing.[50]

The neglect of the Elizabethan for the early literature of England is obvious. Chaucer and his contemporaries were ancients to them, and when they did refer to the earlier period it was looked upon as an age of ignorance. Thomas Blenerhasset in the second part of the Mirror for Magistrates[51] apologized for the meter and content of the poems by explaining

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48 Ben Jonson, edited by C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson, I, 136. Jonson informed Drummond that "S. P. Sidney had ane intention to have transfformed all his Arcadia to ye stories of King Arthure."

49 Sir Philip Sidney, The Countess of Pembrokes Arcadia, edited by Hain Friswell, xxxv.

50 Sir Philip Sidney, The Defence of Poesie, edited by Albert Feuillerat, p. 32.

51 Mirror for Magistrates, edited by Joseph Haslewood, I, Pt. 2, p. 350.

that the heroes whose falls he penned were of the old world; consequently the style was chosen to conform to the subject. To George Puttenham the romances and historical rhymes were recreation for the common people at Christmas dinners, and bridals; they were sung in taverns, ale houses, and such places of base resort.[52] Though he condemns the old stories, he composed a historical ditty on the Isle of Great Britain for the people who desired to hear old adventures.[53] Roger Ascham, while condemning the Italian books, expresses a dislike for the stories of Chivalry[54] but he does not mention the Charlemagne romances in his examples. Burton has an aversion for the romances and idle play-books. In his Anatomy of Melancholy he recommends study for the person who is "Overrun with solitariness, or carried away with pleasing melancholy and vain conceits," but, he continues, "such Inamoratoes as read nothing but Play-books, idle Poems, Jests, Amadis de Gaul, The Knight of the Sun, The Seven Champions, Palmerin de Oliva,

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[52] Gregory Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, II, 87.

[53] Ibid., II, 43.

[54] Roger Ascham, The Scholemaster, edited by Edward Arber, p. 80.

(Sir) Huon of Bordeaux, E. C. Such many times prove in the end as mad as Don Quixote."[55] Again, he condemns the customs of the Gentry, declaring that if they read a book at any time it is an English Chronicle, Sir Huon of Bordeaux, Amadis de Gaul, a Play-book, or some pamphlet of news.[56] Webbes refers to the old ballads and romances as "bolde ditties made over the Beere Potts" that any many could read without danger.[57]

The perverse opinion of the old romances as expressed by Thomas Nashe is a plain-spoken summary of the attitude of all the writers of his time who were attempting to re-make English literature. Perhaps Nashe was thinking of the popularity of the prose romances at the expense of his own writings. If Nashe did not know the romances, as Mckerrow suggests,[58] he

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55 Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, II, 107.

56 Ibid., I, 370.

57 Gregory Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, I, 255.

58 The Works of Thomas Nashe, edited by Ronald B. McKerrow, V, 135.

> Finally, what did Nashe know of English literature before his own time? Very little, I think; but probably not less than the majority of his contemporaries. Chaucer is mentioned eight times, but Nashe nowhere shows any real knowledge of his works. Gower and Lydgate are once named, together with Chaucer, as men who lived, 'under the tyranny of ignorance.' The prose romances of the type of Morte Arthure, Huon of Bordeaux and The Four Sons of Aymon, and the verse romance of Benis of Hampton are contemptuously dismissed as out of date, or quoted for the purpose of ridicule.

certainly was not acquainted with the material that was being read by the great mass of people.

Francis Meres put the final censure on Huon of Bordeaux, The Four Sons of Aymon, and The Seven Champions of Christendom when he included them in his list of condemned books in Palladis Tamia.[59]

The reformers and professional writers were not the only ones who disapproved of the romances. Beaumont in his Knight of the Burning Pestle staged his satire on the attitude of the audience toward the ancient tales of knights. In another play, Lingua, written primarily for an academic audience, but long a favorite of the general reading public, Huon of Bordeaux along with Guy of Warwick and other heroes of the romances is portrayed as the "mirror of knighthood"; in response to this, another character replied, "Downwards, I'll swear, for there's stinking lies in them."[60]

By the sixteenth century the Charlemagne Romances were almost forgotten. Few poets referred to Roland, Oliver, and Ganelon, and Skelton seems to have been the only one who even remotely knew Ferumbras. Except for the survival of the two prose romances, the Charlemagne stories were completely dead.

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[59] Francis Meres, Palladis Tamia, edited by Don Cameron Allen, p. 268.

[60] Ronald S. Crane, "The Vogue of Guy of Warwick," P.M.L.A., XXX (1915), 140 (quoted from Dodsley's Old English Plays, edited by Hazlitt, IX (1874), 365-366).

Nothing of the heroic element survived; little trace of their existence was left upon Renaissance literature. At the close of the century the stories were re-introduced through the Italian poets, but even this glamorous new dress did not revive any interest in Charlemagne and his peers.

CHAPTER IV

THE ITALIAN CHARLEMAGNE STORIES IN ENGLAND

After the Charlemagne stories had undergone the transformation they received at the pens of the Italian Renaissance writers, they could hardly be recognized as belonging to the cycle of the French epic poems. The real Charlemagne Romances were dead as far as the Elizabethan was concerned. But the Englishman who received his education in Italy met with these stories in different apparel and took them back to England. To the sober Englishman they were as despised and condemned as their affected importers were; nevertheless, they remained, and they left their mark on Elizabethan literature.

All during the sixteenth century English scholars and courtiers traveled in Italy to complete their education. Once there, they spent their time collecting books, copying manuscripts, and picking up all manner of learning to carry back to their native land. The clothing, language, and actions of

the courtier who was educated in Italy became affected--much to the humiliation of the Englishmen. So despised were they that they were contemptuously referred to as "Italianate Englishmen." The books that these scholars imported into England were condemned as being unfit for reading,[1] but they were read and translated, and served as models for English literature. Wyatt and Surry ushered into England the sonnet form; in 1557, Tottel's Miscellany introduced new forms of poetry to the Island; the collections of Elizabethan sonnets betray Italian sources and ideas; and such poets as Gascoigne,

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[1] Roger Ascham, The Scholemaster, edited by William Arber, pp. 80-81:

> They open, not fond and common wayes to vice, but such subtle, cunnyng, new, and diverse shiftes, to cary yong willes to vanitie, and yong wittes to mischief, to teach old bawdes new schole poyntes, as the simple head of an Englishman is not able to inuent, nor neuer was heard of in England before, yea when Papestrie ouerflowed all. Suffer these bookes to be read, and they shall soon displace all bookes of godly learning. For they, carying the will to vanitie and marrying good maners, shall easily corrupt the mynde with ill opinions, and false iudgement in doctrine: first, to think nothyng of God hym selfe, one speciall pointe that is to be learned in Italie, and Italian bookes. And that which is to be most lamented, and therfore more nedefull to be looked to, there be moe of these vngratious bookes set out in Printe within these fewe monthes, than haue bene sene in England many score yeare(s) before. And bicause our English men made Italians can not hurt, but certaine persons, and in certaine places, therfore these Italian bookes are made English, to bryng mischief enough openly and boldly, to all states great and meane, yong and old, euerywhere.

Florio, and Harington popularized translations from the Italian. In 1568, Tancred and Gismunda, the first English drama, the plot of which is known to have been based on an Italian tale,[2] was produced. Soon after this, the stories from Bandello, Boccaccio, and Ariosto were favorite sources for the playwrite.

Since Ariosto's Orlando Furioso was the great work in European literature in the sixteenth century, it must have been the chief book that struck the attention of the Englishman who traveled in Italy. The earlier stories on the subject of Charlemagne, Pulci's Morgante Maggiore (1481-82) and Boiardo's Orlando Innamorato (1486) do not appear to have been very well known in England, but Orlando Furioso was translated (in part) several times and was imitated. A striking point is that the great Elizabethans, Spenser and Harington, took Ariosto's poem as a serious work. Though the Italian poet has the same framework as the Charlemagne Romances--the continuous wars of the French emperor against the Saracens--the manner in which he treats these stories entirely obscures the real glories of the French heroes. Ariosto had the Renaissance attitude toward the idealized stories of Chivalry, and his treatment of them is not unlike that of Cervantes. Bitter satire and

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[2] Lewis Einstein, The Italian Renaissance in England, p. 367.

mockery pervade his work, but sometimes he is genuinely serious. He took up the story that Boiardo had laid down, added to it, and created new material, though he assumes on the part of the reader a knowledge of the earlier work. Instead of one continued story, there are twenty-four fairly long ones. The single theme that runs throughout the book is the love affair of Ruggiero and Bradamant. Orlando is not the hero; the account of his madness is only one of the episodes. We do not wonder that Ariosto's patron, when presented with the work, asked the author where he got so many trifles.

The history of Ariodant and Geneuor found in the fourth, fifth, and sixth cantos of Orlando Furioso was the first story to be translated into English[3] and it seems to have been more popular than the other episodes. It was translated by Beverlay and Tubervil[4] and dramatized[5] before Harington's translation

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[3] Stationer's Register, I, 140 b. "Recevyd of henry Wekes for his lycense for pryntinge of a boke intituled tragigall and pleasaunt history of / Ariounder Jeneuor the Doughter unto the kynge of (?) by Peter Beverlay."

[4] John Harington, Orlando Furioso in English Heroical Verse (first ed.), p. 39. "Howsoeuer it was, sure the tale is a prittie comicall matter, hath been written in English verse some few years past (learnedly with good grace) though in verse of another kind, by M. George Tuberuil." No copy of this translation is known.

[5] The Revels Accounts (1582, edited by Peter Cunningham, for the Shakespeare Society 1842).

of the complete poem. Spenser and Shakespeare used this story. A summary of this story follows.

Rinaldo, having been driven by storm to the coast of Britain encountered two ruffians who were about to murder a damsel. He rescued the girl who identified herself as Dalinda, maid of Geneuor, daughter of the king of Scotland. She told him that her mistress was condemned to die in fifteen days for having been accused of adultery, unless some knight would agree to fight with her accuser and prove her innocence. Dalinda had loved the Duke of Alban who sought the hand of the Scotch princess. Ariodant was in love with Geneuor. Because of her great love for the Duke, Dalinda allowed him to persuade her to betray her mistress by dressing in her clothing and appearing at the window with the Duke so that Ariodant would be deceived into thinking his lady was unfaithful to him. Ariodant was deceived. On his way to the sea where he planned to end his life by drowning, he met a shepherd who carried a message to Geneuor telling her what her lover planned to do. Upon learning the false story, the king resolved that his daughter should die within fifteen days unless some knight proved her innocence by fighting for her. Rinaldo resolved to fight with her accuser, over whom he was victorious. Ariodant had changed his mind about suicide after he jumped into the sea; he swam out and arrived at Court in time to win

the hand of his innocent lady love.[6]

The most important translation of the Elizabethan period, and the most important translation of Orlando Furioso in English was that of John Harington. An amusing story is connected with the young poet's translation of this work. Harington, the god-son of the queen, had already distinguished himself at Court as a wit. Sometime during the 1580's he translated from Ariosto the wanton story of Canto 28 (a notorious satire on women) and circulated it among the ladies of Elizabeth's Court. The maids appeared to be delighted with it. Eventually the translation fell into the hands of the queen herself. She reproved Harington for corrupting the morals of her ladies by giving to them the worst story from Ariosto, and banished him from Court until he should finish translating the entire poem. In 1591, he appeared with the finished work which he dedicated to the queen. She seemed pleased with the translation, and the following year honored Harington by visiting him at his home. A second edition of the Orlando appeared in 1607, and a third in 1626. There have been no other editions.

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[6] The theme of this story is found in Bandello's Nouvella, l. 20, and also Cintio, Gli Hecotomorithi; L'Introducione, Novella Nona. Belleforest (Histories Tragiques, Vol. III) follows but scarcely translates Bandello. Mary Augusta Scott, op. cit., p. 229.

Harington's work is more than a mere translation; it represents a thorough study of the poem. He took his task seriously, a fact which seems ridiculous when we consider the circumstances that accounted for his making the translation. In addition to translating the poem, he took the trouble to point out the moral (otherwise it might not be observed) and the history. He wrote "An Apologie of Poetrie" to precede the translation, and "A Brief and Svmmarie Allegorie of Orlando Fvrioso, not Vnpleasaunt nor Vnprofitable" and "The Life of Ariosto Briefly and Compendiously Gathered ovt of Svndrie Italian Writers" to conclude it. Also, for the benefit of the reader he made "An Exact and Necessarie Table in Order of Alphabet VWherein Yov may Readilie Finde the Names of the Principall Persons treated in this Work, with the Chief Matters that Concerne them," and pointed out a list of "The Principal Tales in Orlando Furioso that may be Read by Themselves." In his "Apologie" he makes the usual Elizabethan defence of poetry, often using Sidney's ideas and penning them as such. His translation represents the genius of a scholar and a poet who saw in the task he was attempting something worth doing.

Of the numerous Italian editions, the one from which Harington took most of his material was that published by Francesco Franceschi of Venice in 1584--probably the finest

and most elaborate of the sixteenth century editions.[7] For some of his illustrations he used the 1565 edition published in Venice by Vincenzo Valgrisi.[8] The publisher must have had a great deal of faith in the popularity of Harington's translation to go to the immense cost of bringing out such an elaborate edition. The engravings alone make this work the best illustrated volume to appear in England up to that time. The second edition was made even more elaborate by colored illustrations.[9]

Harington translated freely without feeling obligated to follow his original closely. The first six books are a fairly close translation, but after that the translator left out the matter that would be boring to the English reader. In his "Apologie for Poetrie" he admitted that he had taken liberties

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[7] Townsend Rich, Harington and Ariosto, Yale Studies in English, Vol. 92, p. 151.

[8] Ibid., p. 55.

[9] Ibid., p. 58. Rich says: "As early as 1593 printers were talking of a new edition with colored illustrations. Nothing came of this, but there are copies of the 1591 edition with the plates colored by hand." Duke Library has a copy of the 1607 edition, and the plates are in color.

with the Italian and explained his reasons for doing so.[10] The general tendency of Harington was to compress the matter of two or three stanzas into one. Occasionally he expanded the matter, making two stanzas out of one. It is not odd to the person who is acquainted with the writings of Harington that he elaborated on the already lascivious passages of Ariosto, and if the queen had been offended at the satire on women expressed in the twenty-eighth canto, she would have been really baffled when he brought out the entire book. Never does Harington let slip one chance to attack the virtues of women; here again he almost always goes beyond Ariosto. One of the passages which Harington changes in order to make an attack on women is one in which Ariosto described Aleina who had concealed her hideous appearance by art:

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[10] Harington, Orlando Furioso, "Apologie for Poetrie":

> For my omiting and abreuiating some things, either im matters impertinent to vs, or in some too tedious flatteries of persons that we neuer heard of, if I haue done ill I craue pardon; for sure I did it for the best. But if any being studious of the Italian, would for his bitter vnderstanding compare them, the first sixe bookes, saue a little of the third, will stand him in steed. But yet I would not haue any man except that I should obserue his phrase so strictly as an interpreter, nor the matter so carefully as if it had bene a storie, in which to varie were as great a sinne, as it were simplicitie in this to go word for word.

Ma sì l'arti vsa, ai nostra tempo ignote,
Che bella e giovenetta parer puote.
(VII, 73, ll. 7-8.)

I feare her arts are learned now a dayes,
To counterfait their haire, and paint their skin,
But reasons ring their crafts and guiles bewrayes,
No wise men of their paintings passe a pin,
Those vertues that in women merit praise,
Are sober shows without, chast thoughts within,
True faith, and due obedience to their make,
And of their children honest care to take.
(VII, 63)

Harington (VIII, 1-2) blamed women entirely with deception practiced in love, whereas Ariosto blamed both men and women. In spite of Harington's prejudices, his translation is a work of art. He rhymes easily and retains the beauty of the idiomatic Italian verse. His fame rests upon this translation.

Mary Augusta Scott has pointed out six plays in Elizabethan English that may be referred to Orlando Furioso;[11] Ariodant and Geneuora (1582), The History of Orlando Furioso (1594), Much Ado about Nothing (1600), The Tempest (1623), Silecides (1631), and The Sea Voyage (1647).

Ariodant and Geneuora, founded on the story in the fifth canto of Ariosto, was presented before the queen in 1582.[12]

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[11] Mary Augusta Scott, Elizabethan Translations from the Italian, p. 135.

[12] See Chapter IV, note 5.

Greene's History of Orlando Furioso is the only play founded on Ariosto that deals with the character Orlando. The play must have been fairly popular, since it was published in 1594 and reprinted in 1598. According to Henslowe's Diary the play was acted before February 2, 1592,[13] and there is evidence that the play must have been written about 1589.[14] It was performed by Lord Strange's men as an old play.[15] The writer of the Defence of Cony-Catching (1592) accuses Greene of selling this play to the Queen's men and later to the Admiral's men. Had Strange's men sent the play to the press we should probably have had the full text. The play, as we have it, most likely represents a shortened version used by the Queen's men for provincial acting and sent by them to the

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13 Henslowe's Diary, edited by W. W. Gregg, I, 13.

14 There is an allusion to the Armada, ll. 82-88, which suggests that the author wrote this play while the defeat of the Armada was still fresh in the minds of the people. Other passages ll. 66-9 and Alleyn MX. 874 also appear in Peele's Old Wives Tale, ll. 885-8 and 678-9, which must belong to 1590. Peele also copied the name for his Scrapant (Sacripant).

15 The play Brandimer in Henslowe's Diary, I, 13-14, appears to be the same play as Orlando Furioso.

Gregg says (Henslowe's Diary, II, 155), "Brandimer might stand for Brandimart, a character in Greene's Orlando (3). He could not, indeed, give his name to the piece as we have it, but as King of the Isles he typifies England (cf. ed. Collins, ll. 82 & c.), and it is conceivable that there may have been another play, in which he bore a more prominent part, or even that he may have done so in the unabridged version."

press in 1593. It was, no doubt, they who performed the play at Court three times before the end of 1591. The play was famous enough to justify Edward Alleyn's playing the part of Orlando.

Greene took the idea of the plot and the characters from Ariosto. Nothing about the play suggests that the author might have known Harington's translation, and the proud courtier must have been profoundly irritated when he learned that this base professional writer had used the epic in his play. Greene was thoroughly familiar with Ariosto.[16] He took the incidents from the Italian poet and adopted them to his own

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[16] C. W. Lemmi, "The Sources of Orlando Furioso," MLN 31 (Nov., 1916), pp. 440-41:

"He quotes in the original from Canto xxvi in Francesco's Fortunes and from canto xxvi in The Spanish Masquerado; he takes from canto xxxiv the story of Lydia in Orpharion; he twice alludes to canto xix in Alcida; he gives us as translated from the poem three stanzas in Penelope's Web. ... In the play itself he quotes in the original from canto xxvii (Act II. Scene i), accurately translates from canto xv (Act I. scene i), paraphrases the description, in canto xli, of Orlando's helmet, and, so closely follows the description of Orlando's attempts at self-delusion in canto xxiii that it amounts to paraphrasing."

purpose.[17]

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17 Ibid. "For one thing we know that practically every situation in Greene's Orlando Furioso had its analogue in Ariosto's. Thus in the play Angellica brings war upon her lenient father by choosing from 'An embassy of suitors,' as one scholar calls them, the least exhaulted of their number, Count Orlando, who, however promptly appears before the Castle of one of them and after sending in a fruitless challenge by a sentry storms the place and without pausing to take part in the massacre of the garrison pursues his rival to the death; the other competors he deals with similarly later. In the poem (canto ix) the princess Olympia similarly brings war upon an equally lenient father by keeping her faith to the young Duke of Zeland despite the representations of an embassy of distinguished men who request her hand in behalf of the King of Frisia; whereupon Orlando, who happens by, appears before the King's city, and after sending in a fruitless challenge by a sentry storms the place and 'taking no notice of the common heard' pursues the king to his death. In the play one of the rejected suitors, they crafty Sacrapant, causes Angelica to be banished, then condemned to death by her father, by falsely representing her as unchastly faithless to Orlando, who, however, rescues her, clears her name, and wrings confession and life from her accuser. In the poem (canto iv) another scheming aspirant to the hand of another princess attempts precisely the same thing (and incidentally furnishes Shakespeare with the similar episode in Much Ado About Nothing); whereupon the knight Rinaldo wrings confession and life from him, having first rescued the Princess' maid from ruffins in a forest precisely as Orlando, in the play, rescues Angelica. In both play and poem Orlando goes mad when he becomes convinced that Angelica is false to him." ~~M. R. Morrison, "R. G.'s, Use of Ariosto in Orlando Furioso," MLN 49 (Nov. 1934) pp. 449-51.~~

"In summing up the indebtedness of Robert Greene to cantos iv, v, and vi of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso we reach the following conclusions: (1) The character of Sacripant is inspired by the character of Polinesso. (2) The character of Angelica and the whole course of her fortune has been anticipated by Geneura. (3) The estrangement of the lovers in Act II, Scene ii, is found in Canto v. (4) The expedition of the Peers in Act iv is based on Lucarno's attempt to avenge his brother. (5) In Act v, Scene i, the confession and death of Sacripant parallels the confession and death of Polinesso. (6) In Act v, Scene ii, the tournament is based on the Tourney in Canto v. (7) The masking of Orlando is borrowed from the masking of Ariodantes. (8) The reconciliation and betrothal is borrowed from Canto vi, which continues and concludes the Ariodantes-Geneura tale in Ariosto."--M. R. Morrison. "R. G.'s Use of Ariosto in Orlando Furioso," MLN 49 (Nov. 1934) pp. 449-51.

Greene, as a professional man of letters, had to make his play meet the demands of the theatre-going people. Orlando in Ariosto and in all European literature was Charlemagne's right-hand man; he surpassed the emperor in heroic deeds. Greene made of him the Renaissance hero who rose from an insignificant position by his own merits. Nor could Angelica of the epic, whose sole virtue was beauty, have been a popular heroine. Orlando was by no means her accepted suitor; in fact, Sacrapant was favored above him. Greene made Sacrapant into a crafty villain, the spurned lover who sought vengeance on Angelica by forging love sonnets from the base Medor to her. In the epic, the love between Angelica and Medor was genuine, (Medor was no base character) and they were married. Greene's working over of his borrowings from Ariosto is no more than one would expect to find in any Elizabethan play.

The story of Orlando's madness from which Greene's play is generally supppsed to have been taken is found in the twenty-third book of Ariosto, though it extends until the thirty-ninth book. Following is a brief summary of the episode of Orlando's madness.

After bidding Zerbino and his wife adieu, Orlando decided to go back to Charles's Court, instead of waiting for Mandricard, the pagan, to meet him in combat. On the way back he stopped in a shady place to rest. Unfortunately, it was the very place where Angelica and Medoro spent their time while Medoro was

recovering from his wounds. When Orlando looked about he saw Angelica's name carved upon all the trees and joined with love knots to Medoro's name. On every tree and rock was the story of their love, and on these Orlando read his doom. He was confused and overcome with despair. He came to the shepherd's cottage and learned the whole story of Angelica's care for Medoro, their love, his recovery, and their marriage. During the night he left secretly because he could not endure the place where Angelica had loved another. He took his sword Durindana and destroyed every rock and tree that betrayed the love of the young couple. Tearing off his clothing, he ran naked through the country, terrifying all the shepherds. Whenever anyone crossed his path he tore him apart as if he had been a lark. Only once he saw Angelica but his mind was so distracted that he did not recognize her. Finally, Astolpho, the English Duke, went to the moon and obtained Orlando's senses from St. John. A group of men held the mad man and made him breathe his senses from a jug, after which he was completely recovered from his love.

Shakespeare's The Tempest suggests the shipwreck of

Rogero described in Book XLI of Orlando Furioso.[18]

Pineas Fletcher's Sicelides is taken from the eighth and tenth cantos of Orlando in which is related the story of Angelica and the Orc. Fletcher follows the Italian so closely that his source cannot be mistaken, though he takes the usual Elizabethan freedom with borrowed material. In Ariosto, Angelica was misguided by a loathsome hermit who lead her into a desert place and charmed her to sleep by sprinkling magic water into her eyes. The natives who found her had a practice of daily sacrificing a beautiful virgin to a monstrous Orke, in order to appease the beast. They tied her to a great rock

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[18] Hunter is one of the few who attempts to show that Shakespeare was familiar with Ariosto's work. He says, "The storm described by Ariosto is the principal incident of the forty-first canto of the Orlando. Shakespeare's obligations to it have never before been suggested. Of course, there must be in Ariosto, as there are also in Shakespeare, incidents and circumstances which are common to all storms. But what I contend for is this: that beside these incidents and circumstances, there are some which are sufficiently critical and peculiar, to lead to the inference that there was suggestion on the part of the earlier poet, and imitation (a just and proper imitation) on the part of Shakespeare. ... Now, besides whatever of general resemblance there may be, there are the following minute and critical circumstances common to both. We have the master and the master's whistle in both. I do not say that to introduce the whistle might not occur to both poets; but I think it improbable when both were seeking to fix the interest on a king and a prince in peril of drowning; we have the leaking of the ship in both; the striking of the sails in both; the falling to prayer in both; and, what is more remarkable, the contempt of rank and royalty in both." He draws other parallels to prove that Shakespeare was indebted to Ariosto. Furness, however, does not agree with this theory, but contends that the storms described by both Shakespeare and Ariosto is within the range of anybody's imagination. A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare, IX, 320-324.

where the monster was accustomed to come for his costly food. Rinaldo appeared on the scene in time to rescue her by killing the Orke. In Sicelides, Olinda is sacrificed to the sea monster, Malorcha, because she had pulled some apples from the Hesperian tree. She, like Angelica, was loved by a wicked old man, Mago. The young hero, Thlander, disguised as Atyches, killed the Orc and rescued her. The conception of the Orc and of the young girl being loved by the despised old man appears to be taken directly from the Orlando.

John Fletcher's The Sea Voyage can be traced to the legend of Hypsipyle on Lemnos reproduced in the twentieth canto of Orlando Furioso. In his play, as in the poem, a group of sailors were driven by storm to an island inhabited by women. In both play and poem the women had their own set of laws, and man was their greatest enemy. It appears that Fletcher took his idea of government by the women from the tale of the Amazons in Ariosto.

Of the Italian books translated into English, the stories centered around Charlemagne received their full share. In 1572, Philippe Desportes published Roland Furieux, imitation de l'Arioste. La Mort de Rodoment ... Partie imitee de l'Arioste, Partie de l'invention de l'auteur Angelique. Continuation du sujet de l'Arioste.[18] This work was translated by Gervase

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[18] Scott, Elizebethan Translations from the Italian, p. 169.

Markham and published in 1598,[19] and again in 1607.

Markham's dependence upon Harington's translation has been pointed out by Franklin B. Williams.[20] Apparently, Markham had a copy of Harington before him while he was making his translation, and whenever he had difficulty finding a rhyming word he did not hesitate to refer to his predecessor. An example of the liberties he took can be found in the following stanza from Desportes which he translated:

> [Roger] Dresse le bras bien hault, puis comme vne tempeste
> Luy donne du poignard trois coups dessus la teste,
> Et autant sur le front tout rouge & tout souillé:
> Le cerueau tombe à bas du test escarbauillé,
> Et l'ame en blasphemant orgueilleuse & despite
> Vers l'ombreux acheron soudainement prend fuite,
> Abandonnant le corps qui roidist froid & blanc
> Ondoyant tout par tout à gros bouillons de sang.

Markham, instead of following Desportes, followed Harrington:

> And lifting his victorious hand on hie,
> In the Turkes face he stabd his dagger twice
> Vp to the hilts, and quickly made him die,

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[19] Stationer's Register, III, 41b (September 1598). Nicholas Lynge Entred for his Copie vnder the handes of bothe the wardens, a booke intituled Rodomanthus in fernall or The Devill Conquered Ariostos Conclusions of the marriage of Rogero with Bradamanth his loue and the fell faught battaile betwene Rogero and Rodomanthus the never Conquered Pagan written in Efrench by Phillip De Portes and paraphrasticallie translated by G. M. vjd

[20] Franklin B. Williams, "Orlando Furioso and Rodamonths Infernall," MLN 51 (1936) pp. 173-175.

Ridding himselfe of trouble in a trice;
Downe to the lake where damned ghosts doe lie
Sunke his disdainfull soule, now cold as yce:
Blaspheming (as it were) and cursing lowd,
That was on earth so loftie and so prowd.

Markham's is an exact copy of Harington's last stanza in the Orlando except for three verbal changes: In line 2, Harington has "that Turkes;" in line 4, "And rid himself of trouble;" and line 7, "(as it went)." In Rodomonths Infernall, stanzas 45, 48, 54, and 55 are borrowed bodily from Harington, while two or more lines of Harington's are utilized in stanzas 49, 50, 51, and 53. After Harington's translation ended, Markham was forced to follow Desportes more closely.

Spenser's indebtness to Orlando Furioso has long been recognized. He acknowledged his imitation of Ariosto and others, and in his Faerie Queene he made an attempt to surpass the Orlando.[21] Throughout his poem he recalled the stories from Ariosto rather frequently, and the entire plan of his work appears to be founded on Orlando Furioso. As early as 1754 Thomas Warton[22] in his study of the Faerie Queene pointed out

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[21] R. E. Neil Dodge, "Spenser's Imitations of Ariosto," PMLA 12 (1897), p. 153 (part of Harvey's letter to Spenser is reproduced here).

[22] Thomas Warton, Observations on the Faerie Queene, pp. 142-159.

a number of parallel passages between Spenser and Ariosto but he made no attempt to explain them. About the close of the nineteenth century Professor R. E. Dodge[23] made a closer study of Spenser's imitation of Ariosto; since then Professor Allan H. Gilbert has supplemented this work.[24]

Spenser took Ariosto seriously; the great epic written with the sole purpose of delighting the reader was moralized by the English poet, and he saw in these tales an outlet for his allegory. In noting passages of similarity between the Faerie Queene and Orlando Furioso, Dodge points out the following:

The address to Love (F. Q. III, iii, 1-2), was undoubtedly suggested to Spenser by Ariosto's address (O. F. II, i), though Spenser substituted for the conventional sentiment of the Italian his own grave and lofty meditation.

In Orlando Furioso (I, 22) after relating the flight of Angelica from her fighting suitors, the author breaks out into a humorous and ironic exhaltation of the times of old; in the Faerie Queene (III, i, 12) after the course of Britomart and Sir Guyon, Spenser breaks out into an apostrophe which is the

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23 R. E. Neil Dodge, loc. cit., pp. 151-204.

24 Allan H. Gilbert, "Spenser's Imitations from Ariosto: Supplementary," PMLA 34 (1919) pp. 225-232.

exact counterpart of Ariosto's, the first line of it being a free translation from the Italian. The situation in these episodes is much the same. Rinaldo and Ferraù are reconciled after the fight, though for a comically unchivalric motive, and rush off together in pursuit of Angelica; Britomart and Guyon are likewise reconciled after fight and ride on together in good companionship. Spenser adopted Ariosto's apostrophe, but ignored the irony.

The episode relating Angelica's flight from her lovers, the duel between Rinaldo and Sacrapant, and the misleading of Angelica by the false hermit (O. F. I, 72-81; II, 1-23; VIII, 29ff) was fresh in Spenser's mind when he wrote of Una's quest of the Red Cross Knight, the battle between Satyrone and Sansloy, and Archimago's pursuit of Una (F. Q. I, vi, 34ff).

Orlando is not the real hero of the Italian poem, but the chief characters are Ruggiero and Bradamante. In the Faerie Queene Arthur, the nominal hero, remains a figure-head, and the Fairy Queen does not appear at all; if the poem has a center of interest, it is the love-story of Arthegall and Britomart. Dodge has observed that almost every point of their love-story touches Ariosto.

Britomart falls in love with Arthegall by a single glimpse of his image (F. Q. III, ii, 22ff); the first account we have of Bradamante (O. F. II, 22) tells us that she is in love with

Ruggiero whom she has seen but once. The visit of Gladucé and Britomart to Merlin in his cave and the prophecy of Britomart's future line (F. Q. III, iii) is taken bodily from the Furioso (O. F. III) in which Bradamante enters the cave of Merlin by chance, and is informed of her descendants by Melissa. Britomart, wandering about Fairy Land in quest of Arthegall is like Bradamante, who is wandering about France in quest of Ruggiero (O. F. II, 33). Arthegall's courtship of Britomart follows closely upon their very first meeting (F. Q. IV, vi, 40ff). Arthegall leaving Britomart, to pursue his quest, and promising to return at the end of three months (F. Q. IV, vi, 42-43) is like Ruggiero pursuing his affaire d'honneur with Rodomonte and promising to rejoin Bradamante within twenty days (O. F. XXX, 76-81). Britomart waiting for the return of Arthegall (F. Q. V., vi) is the exact counterpart of Bradamante waiting for the return of Ruggiero (O. F. XXX, 84ff). Talus who brings back news of Arthegall's defeat by Radegund and his captivity, thereby rousing Britomart's jealousy, corresponds to the "cavallier guascone" who brings to Bradamante the report that Ruggiero is betrothed to Marfisa. The conduct of the two women when they hear the news is exactly the same. The prophecy of Merlin of the final destiny of Britomart and Arthegall (F. Q. III, iii, 28) is almost exactly that of Bradamante and Ruggiero (O. F. XLI, 60ff).

Spenser borrowed characters, as well as plot, from Ariosto. The character of the coward, Braggadochio, is drawn from the braggart, Mandricardo, and the coward, Martano. The passages which tell of the stealing of Arthur's sword may be compared with that which tells of the appropriation of Durindana by Mandricardo (F. Q. II, iii, vi, viii, ix and O. F. XXXIV, 58, 59). In almost every incident of Braggadochio's career we find some reminiscence of either Mandricardo, the braggart, or Martano, the coward.

Spenser adopts situations from Ariosto freely, but he tones down the comedy to harmonize with the general seriousness of his work. The joust of Marfisa and Zerbino in the presence of the hag, Gabrina (O. F. XX, 106-129) Spenser had in mind when, in the early Cantos of Book IV, he recounted the conflict of Braggadochio and Blandamour for False Florimel and the hag Atè. The account of Ruggiero in the palace of Alcine (O. F. VII, 21ff) is used by Spenser (F. Q. III, i, 59-61) but he reverses the situation.

Spenser does not imitate the descriptions of Ariosto as much as he does plot and character, probably because he found greater riches in Tasso.

Professor Dodge points out ninety-six passages in Spencer that appear to be imitations of Ariosto. To this list Professor Gilbert adds about fifteen additional resemblances. He further points out that Spenser concludes his cantos in much

the same manner as Ariosto, and that the transition between stories is very similar.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether Spenser had in mind the stories from Ariosto, Tasso, or Boiardo, since some of the stories are found in all three poets, and certainly Spenser was acquainted with all three.

Though Orlando Furioso stood out as the great work of the century, Boiardo's earlier poem, on which Ariosto founded his work, and of which he assumes a knowledge on the part of the reader, was not unknown. It has been suggested by one critic that Spenser did not know the poems on which Ariosto's epic was founded;[25] however, this statement has been eclipsed by an article in which Spenser's imitations of Boiardo have been shown.[26] A summary of the parallels Blanchard has drawn between the Faerie Queene and Orlando Innamorato follows:

I. The incident in which Red Cross and Una meet Sir Trevisan fleeing from Despair (F. Q. I, ix, 21ff) has several details parallel to the one in Orlando Innamorato in which Ranaldo and his company meet a knight fleeing from the fighting

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[25] R. E. Neil Dodge, "Spenser's Imitations from Ariosto," PMLA XII (1897), p. 154.

[26] Harold H. Blanchard, "Spenser and Boiardo," PMLA XL (1925), pp. 828-851.

Orlando (O. I. I, XVII, 51ff): (1) An armed knight, with pale face and general appearance of fear, comes galloping upon a steed; (2) He keeps looking backward as though some pursuer were close behind; (3) He does not reply upon being first questioned. (4) In speaking, his tongue shakes with his body.

II. A parallel between the battle of Red Cross and the Dragon (aside from the parallels found in other sources) has been noted. Both knights are definitely described as fighting in the flame from the dragon's mouth so that their armor becomes heated and they are grievously pressed. (F. Q. I, xi, 26-27 and O. I. XXXIV, 49-51).

III. Belphoebe's splendid utterance to Braggadocchio concerning honor seems to contain elements which might well have been developed from similar passages remembered in both Boiardo and Tasso. (F. Q. II, iii, 40-41; O. I. II, i, 35-36; and G. L. XVII, 61, 62, 63).

IV. The story which Phedon tells to Sir Guyon (F. Q. II, iv, 17ff) is, in the main, taken from O. F. IV, 57ff. A certain part of it, however, is paralleled in an incident in Boiardo (O. I. II, ix, 3ff).

V. A detail in the combat between Sir Guyon and Pyrocles in which Guyon accidentally kills the latter's horse by cutting off its head, (F. Q. II, v. 4) is found in

Boiardo (O. I. III, viii, 38).

VI. The account of Sir Guyon's experience at the river (F. Q. II, vi, 4 and 19) is very similar to that of Ranaldo (O. I. II, ix, 49-53).

VII. Castle Joyous, in which Britomart spends a night at the household of Lady Malecaster (F. Q. III, i, 31) seems to have been suggested in name by Palazza Gioioso, which the devoted Angelica has created for Ranaldo (O. I. I, viii, 1-14): (1) In each case the lady of the palace is offering her love to the guest, and in each case is spurned. (2) The palaces are of great sensuous appeal and costly furnishings.

VIII. The figure of the "hideous beast" which the witch calls forth to pursue Florimel (F. Q. III, vii, 22ff) reminds one in certain of its aspects of the monster known as an orc in Boiardo (O. I. III, iii, 24ff).

IX. The episode in which Britomart comes upon the despairing Scudamore, learns of his trouble, and goes with him to the Castle of Busirane (F. Q. III, xi-xii), though found in Ariosto and Tasso, contains certain details that are either nearest to or are to be found alone in Boiardo (O. I. I, xvi, 60-61).

X. In the joust between Britomart and Artegall there occurs a detail which is closely paralleled in Boiardo by one in the combat between Brandimarte and the giant Oridante. In each case the horse is struck on the back behind the saddle and the owner of the horse continues the combat doughtily on foot with sword. (F. Q. IV, vi, 13-14 and O. I. I, xx, 15-16).

XI. The adventure by which Scudamore gains the Shield of Love and hence entrance to Venus' Island (F. Q. IV, x, 5ff) resembles the incident in Boiardo in which Mandricardo comes to the Shield of Hector (O. I. III, ii, 3ff).

XII. When Timias tries to rescue Amoret from the Savage Lust, the latter holds her up before his body as a shield. This incident has a parallel in Boiardo in which Orlando rescues Angelica from Santaria (F. Q. IV, vii, 26-27 and O. I. XV, 35-38).

XIII. The episode of Artegall's dispersing the Souldan's followers (F. Q. V, viii, 50) has similarities to Boiardo's description of a like situation (O. I., iv, 44).

XIV. The incident in which Calidore comes upon Colin Clout piping to the Graces (F. Q. VI, x, 6ff) has a parallel in Boiardo in which Ranaldo comes upon the God of Love and his companions in the Forest of Ardennes (O. I. II, xv,

43ff): (1) In both cases the setting for the incident is the same. (2) Three naked damsels are dancing about a youth who is making merry music. (3) The damsels throw flowers: in Spenser, upon the central maid of all; in Boiardo, at the trespassing Ranaldo.

XV. In the identification of Pastorella as the daughter of Sir Bellamoure and Lady Claribell, Spenser followed Boiardo more than Tasso (F. Q. VI, xii, 2-22 and O. I. II, xxvii, 25ff).

According to the details pointed out by Blanchard, Spenser must have had the Orlando Innamorato in mind when he composed his poem. Boiardo's work was not well known in England.

In 1598, however, Robert Tofte published his translation of the first three books of the Orlando Innamorato.[27] Tofte used the English Heroical verse. Dr. Garnett, author of A History of Italian Literature, in a personal letter to Miss Scott says,[28]

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[27] Mary Augusta Scott, Elizabethan Translations from the Italian, pp. 152-153.

[28] Ibid.

> Tofte's translation of the Orlando Innamorato follows Domenichi's version. The first two or three stanzas are original with the translator, and I think that he occasionally runs two stanzas into one, but in the main his work is a pretty faithful rendering of the rifacimento.

Blackwood's reviewer of Rose's translation from Berni had never heard of Tofte's translation. He announced that no English attempt had been made to translate either Boiardo or his rifacciatore Berni.[29]

The Italian stories did not revive in England any interest in Charlemagne and his peers. Ariosto served as a model for such poets as Spenser and Sidney,[30] and many of his admirers translated his works. Though he centers his stories around the Court of Charlemagne, the main characters are altogether different from those of the romances. Orlando was to the Elizabethan a madman--a joke.[31] To the average person, he could not have

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29 Blackwood's Edinburg Magazine, XIII, (March,1823).

30 Freda Liverant Townsend in Variety in Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia (Duke Thesis) has shown Sidney's use of Ariosto.

31 Sir Arthur Gorges, in a letter to Sir R. Cecil, describes Sir Walter Raleigh's love for the Queen as follows: "Sir Walter Raleigh will grow to be 'Orlando Furioso!' if the bright Angelica persevere against him a little longer." Edward Edwards, The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh, p. 141.

One of the characters in Middleton's The Changling says, "I'll go up and play left-handed Orlando amongst the madmen." Hazelton Spencer, editor, Elizabethan Plays, p. 1031.

been recognized as the Roland of romance.[32] The Italian stories that borrowed the characters and setting from the romances cannot be said to have carried to England any interest in the Matter of France.

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[32] See note 97. In the ballad "St. George for England" Orlando Furioso and Roland are mentioned as two different characters.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

No thorough study of the Charlemagne Romances in English literature has been made. Almost every writer on the subject of romance mentions the Matter of France, but no attempt has been made to show the importance of this material. The Charlemagne Romances entered England through two channels--translations of French stories during the Middle English period, and the stories of Ariosto and Boiardo during the Renaissance period. In the English Charlemagne Romances we have a representation of the Matter of France belonging to the period of decadence; in the stories from the Italian we have the Renaissance attitude toward chivalry.

An investigation of the Medieval and Renaissance English literature reveals that the Charlemagne Romances were never well known to the common people of England. It is true that the glories of Charlemagne, Roland, and Oliver were sung in the courts of the Anglo-Norman dukes long after William the Conqueror had made his conquest of England, but these were French lords

who observed French manners and customs, spoke the French language, and were still interested in the French race. They had their jongleurs who entertained them with the chansons of their native country. Unfortunately, most of the Anglo-French poems have been lost, and our knowledge of the Charlemagne Romances in England must be taken from the imperfect copies preserved in manuscript form. The fact that only four of these romances were printed before the nineteenth century is proof enough that the people, even if they had known them, were not interested in them. The prose romances, Huon of Bordeaux and The Four Sons of Aymon were very popular during the Renaissance, but they cannot be regarded as true examples of the Matter of France; they are merely novels of Chivalry that were much in demand during the sixteenth century. Rauf Coilzear is no more than a Scotch poem out of its proper setting. The Lyf of Charles the Grete, which is a summary of the English Charlemagne Romances, was printed in 1485, but it was not popular enough to go through another edition. Obviously, the Charlemagne Cycle was never popular in England, and not without reason.

In the first place, the Charlemagne Romances are the epics of France. Profound patriotism is their theme, and their chief aim is to sing of the glories of Charlemagne and Roland (chiefly Roland) who represent France. Aside from the racial love and national pride expressed in La Chanson de Roland, the

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romance would be nothing. But the supreme trend of patriotism that runs throughout the poem, and the impressive last thoughts of the hero,

> De dolce France, des homes de son lign,
> De Charlemagne son seignor ki l nordit. [1]

were not for foreigners, but for the Frenchman whose love for his country, his people, and his king was his foremost thought.

When the French first came to England they must have been quite as enthusiastic about the glories of Charlemagne as was Tallifer when he rode at the head of the conquering army singing of Roland and the knights who died at Roncesvalles. The dukes whom William established in England gradually became interested in another nation, and the glories of France no longer interested them. (We have no reason to believe that these stories ever interested the English people.) The chansons that were popular in the English courts glorified the barons and peers instead of Charlemagne. The Emperor whose praises had been sung since the ninth century became too perfect, and in the later chansons his fame fell from the sublime to the ridiculous. In Sir Ferumbras, Otuel, The Four Sons of Aymon, and Huon of Bordeaux, Charlemagne is an old dotard who is

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[1] La Chanson de Roland, ll. 2379-80.

insulted and ridiculed even by his own peers. It seems reasonable that the dukes, seeking to attain more power for themselves, would have delighted in this degrading of the king. Regardless of how the dukes felt about these stories, they never thrived in England.

The English people did not like the French. When the Norman dukes came in to rule the Island they found themselves unpopular. Instead of the people conforming to the rules, the rulers conformed to the people, and by the fourteenth century their hatred of the French was combined. In 1346, shortly after the earliest Charlemagne Romances were put into English, England became involved in war with France. This war continued for one hundred years, and it was during this period that most of the Charlemagne Romances in English were written. Naturally, while England was fighting France she was not interested in the heroes of her past. In France, the glories of Charlemagne and Roland had long since reached their heighth, and the close of the war with England brought forth another national character--Jeanne D'Arc. The English courts, in which the Charlemagne Romances had been kept alive, no longer needed them even for amusement.

The English people had stories of their own Island without adopting the Matter of France. The great cycle of Arthurian Romances that grew up during the twelfth century had a legendary connection with Britain. These legends, though they originated

in France, were much different from the Matter of France. The Arthurian Romances, founded upon legend, were not unlike our modern novels; the Charlemagne Romances, founded upon history, were concerned only with the stories of armed knights. With the French knights, fighting was a profession and a pastime. One overwhelming victory followed another, and the final honor was always for France. Whenever the peers went into battle with their cry "Montjoy", it was certain that a goodly number of Saracens would be slaughtered. With their swords they forced all pagans whom they encountered to become Christians. The accounts of these battles did not interest the Englishman who cared nothing for the French knight nor his Saracen enemy.

Though the Matter of France is often engrossed with legendary material, the supernatural element is simple. Angels did appear to Roland when he was dying, a doe did appear to guide Richard across the swollen stream, Turpin did perform miracles with the Christian relics, and Charlemagne did succeed in getting the sun to stand still until he could avenge the treachery of his peers, but each of these incidents was to prove the supremacy of Christianity over paganism, and similar stories can be found in the Bible. There are no fairies, no all powerful swords like Excalaber, no impossible quests like the search for the Holy Grail, and no magicians like Merlin. Mawgis, in The Four Sons of Aymon, was skilled in magic, but he had no supernatural tactics. When he wanted to make black

Bayard white, he painted him, and when he wanted to disguise Reynawde, he stained his face with herbs. The descriptions of such characters as Ferumbras, Otuel, and Charlemagne are a little extravagant, but not enough to make them characters of another world. As is seen by the popularity of the Arthurian stories, the people liked highly imaginative matter, and the Charlemagne group could not offer this.[2]

Too, the Charlemagne Romances lacked the element of romantic love that is found in the Arthurian group. Women play no important part in the French stories. Roland had a lady love, Aude, but almost nothing is said of their love. Upon hearing of her hero's fate, she died, but Roland never once reminds us of his love for her. The position of women was not very much above that of barbarism. According to the Turpin

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[2] This, of course, does not include the later prose romances that do not adhere to the conventional type. Huon of Bordeaux is quite as fantastical as the Arthurian stories, and it was probably influenced by them. The reference to Tristram and Isault "for trystram dyed for the loue of the fayre Isoude," (Huon of Bordeaux, I, 157), and points in the genealogy of Oberon (ibid., I, 72-73), connect the fairy king with Alexander the Great and Julius Ceasar. In one thirteenth century version, Oberon describes his birth,

> Jules Cesar me nori bien soué
> Morge li fée, qui tant ot de biaute,
> Ch fu ma mere, si me puist Dix salver.
> De ces II fui concus et engerrés.
> (Huon, xxxi)

Morgain the Fay is the sister of King Arthur, thus the author of this romance must have been familiar with the Arthurian stories (Merlin, edited by Henry B. Wheatley, II, 507ff.).

Chronicle, Marsilius sent women, along with other presents, to Charlemagne and his peers. Whenever a Saracen was converted to Christianity he was rewarded with a beautiful woman to be his wife. Aude was given to Roland because Oliver had fought with him, found him his equal in arms, and took him as his comrade. Roland even had the privilege of offering to Otuel the king's daughter, Belisent, in recompense for his becoming a Christian. Floripas, who is little more than a savage, is one of the most important women characters in the romances. She was one of the few women who exercised some choice in her love. Guy of Burgundy impressed her with his might feats, and she determined to have him in spite of her betrothal to Lucifer. When Guy showed hesitation to her proposal, she threatened to have the entire group of French knights killed. She did not hesitate to push her governess out the window and drown her; she knocked out the jailor's brain, then told her father a falsehood about it; and she took the greatest delight in seeing her intended husband roasted alive. In the Matter of Britain the Englishman found the supernatural and the romantic elements. The story of the unconventional love of Guinevere and Lancelot has a universal and lasting appeal. Merlin is a character of interest for all classes and all time. The Arthurian cycle is filled with stories that are fit for all and bower, yet not beyond the common people. They sang of Arthur and Gawain in their ballads, but not one ballad reveals an interest in

Charlemagne and Roland.

The Charlemagne stories that passed under the pens of the Italian poets were so completely transformed that they bear little resemblance to the epics of France. Boiardo and Ariosto were not trying to praise the heroes of France. Using Charlemagne and his wars for their central point, they wove around it their stories of adventure that were entirely foreign to the Matter of France. Such characters as Astolfo, who journeyed to the moon, and such monsters as the Orc, who devoured beautiful maidens, have nothing in common with the adventures of Charlemagne and his peers. The French emperor in the Italian stories does have some of the same characteristics of the character in the late romances,[3] but in neither is he the admirable character of La Chanson de Roland or the Nine Worthies. Roland, the hero of France, is altogether different from Orlando. Each character is recognized as the bravest warrior of France; in the chansons, Roland proves his valor, while in Orlando his position is recognized without proof. Roland is a serious warrior, a character of history; Orlando is a fantastic knight who represents Ariosto's mockery and scorn of Chivalry. The account

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[3] Charles' anger when he learned that Orlando had left Court without permission (O. F., VIII, 77) is very much like the romance character.

> But in great rage and choller when he knew it
> He swore and vowed Orlando sore should rue it.

of Orlando's madness, the chief episode of Orlando Furioso, has not the slightest foundation in the Matter of France. We have no evidence that the Englishmen even associated the Italian stories with the Charlemagne, Roland, and Oliver of France.

Of the Ariosto stories, the madness of Orlando was the only one that was treated by an English author. Greene evidently thought that Orlando's madness would be very spectacular when staged by a raving Elizabethan actor. The character of Orlando was generally known, and often referred to, most likely as the result of Greene's play. No other Elizabethan writer chose the subject of Orlando. In fact, the stories that had no connection with Charlemagne were more popular than the one about Orlando. Spenser, who founded his poem on Orlando Furioso, does not once mention Orlando, nor does he utilize the episode of Orlando's madness. The story of Ariodant and Geneura was used by Spenser and Shakespeare, dramatized once, and translated by two writers (besides Harington). The stories of the Orc and of the Amazons inspired Elizabethan writers. The Elizabethans took the Italian tales as delightful narratives, and saw in them nothing of the history of France. Soon after the Renaissance period, the popularity of the Italian poems declined, and only rarely has any poet since the early seventeenth century been concerned with Ariosto and Boiardo.

The contributions of the Charlemagne Romances to English

literature have been slight--in fact, too slight to attract the attention of any scholar. The poem, Rauf Coilzear, is an offspring of the Charlemagne Cycle. Frequently the Scotch poets showed a knowledge of the legends, but this knowledge went no farther than a brief account of the romance, or a reference to one of the characters. At least one account of the Nine Worthies reveals a knowledge of the romances, but this amounts to no more than a mention of the peers and some of their exploits. No great Middle English nor Renaissance writer made use of them. The romance, Huon of Bordeaux, did introduce into English literature Oberon, who assumed a rather important position in fairy-lore. Ganelon, the traitor, received a position beside Judas Iscariot. One proverb "To give a Roland for an Oliver" survives. Aside from these, nothing remains in English literature to commemorate the glories of Charlemagne and his peers.

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